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Near East/South Asia Report

THE MILITARY OPTION
AFTER THE PALESTINIAN DEPARTURE
FROM BEIRUT

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26 March 1985

NEAR EAST/SOUTH ASIA REPORT

THE MILITARY OPTION
AFTER THE PALESTINIAN DEPARTURE
FROM BEIRUT

Amman AL-KHIYAR AL-'ASKARI BA'D AL-KHURUJ AL-FALASTINI MIN BAYRUT
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[Text] A Statement That Must Be Made

There is no doubt that publication of a book such as this one has been spurred by those regrettable and painful events that have been occurring on the Palestinian scene since the Palestinians' departure from Beirut.

But we are neither intimidated nor alarmed about the future of the liberation organization despite its dismaying breakup and despite growing hostility, in-fighting and conflict among some parties in the Palestinian factions. Not only has this organization had very close ties with the Palestinian people, who are scattered and dispersed in the various countries they immigrated to as well as in the occupied homeland, but it has also had very close ties with the history of their revolutions. The Palestinian people have never bowed their heads to a tyrant; they have never yielded to any conspiracy; nor have they ever submitted to any directive that might dilute their character or undermine the foundations of their legitimate national rights.

However, in-fighting and conflict among Palestinian organizations continue to impede the liberation process. They are impeding a process by which Palestinian presence can be confirmed and Palestinian independence asserted in a battle to establish the legitimate organization firmly and seize the sovereign right to make independent Palestinian decisions.

The conspiracy against the Palestinian people is bigger than the controversy over Yasir 'Arafat's leadership. It is bigger than a splintering operation and even bigger than the question of Arab control over Palestinian decisions. As Professor Moshe Ma'oz, an outstanding professor at Tel Aviv University said, "It is the United States that is making the plans for Israel's aggressive policy, which it backs up. In my opinion the United States harbors more hostility and hatred for the Palestine Liberation Organization than Israel does."

It is not at all unlikely for the United States and its institutions and Zionism and its circles to be making plans that would hurt the liberation organization and put an end to it since all their tools of destruction had failed to immobilize it.

We do become aware of the dimensions of the conspiracy that is being woven against the Palestinian cause and the Palestinian people when we consider the historic battle of steadfastness in Beirut under whose ruins the plans of all conspirators collapsed. We become aware of that conspiracy when we find that this great victory for the Palestinian Resistance was subverted by a demand to get rid of the commander of the Palestinian Revolutionary forces, who was the last person to leave the battlefield. Those conspirators wanted to fragment and divide the Palestinian people; they wanted to instill malice and hatred in the hearts of Palestinian citizens and in their ranks so that no objective evaluation of the battle of Beirut would be conducted. For such an evaluation would expose the conspiracy they had spearheaded. Those conspirators did not want the dimensions of the victory, which they have so far been able to steal from the Resistance, to be shown. The Resistance had opposed the enemy and held its ground in the largest battle in the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict in which the most modern advanced weapons were used. The United States tested these weapons for the first time against the Palestinians.

And here we must pause briefly to consider the interview that Alex Fishman, an Israeli military commentator, conducted with Gen Ehud Barak, chief of Israel's military intelligence agency on 6 October 1984. Mr Fishman asked Gen Ehud Barak in what shape would Israel like to see the PLO. Without hesitation, the chief of Israel's military intelligence agency said, "Of course we want the PLO to be fragmented and divided. We want it weakened by differences and unable to convene its National Council."

It is not unlikely for Gen Ehud Barak to be involved in conspiracies that are being planned and carried out against the PLO. He was the one who led the special unit that landed on the shores of Beirut and carried out the Fardan operation. This is the operation in which three Palestinian leaders, Kamal 'Adwan, Kamal Nasir and Abu Yusuf al-Najjar, lost their lives.

Gen Ehud Barak was appointed chief of Israel's intelligence agency on 15 April 1983, immediately after Israel committed its major crime, the massacre of the century in the Sabra and Shatila camps.

This means that Gen Ehud Barak, who wants the PLO to be fragmented, has been involved with attempts to liquidate the PLO, or rather, with attempts to liquidate the Palestinian people.

What has to be made clear, or rather affirmed, is that it would never occur to anyone to think that, when it first happened, the breakup in the organization was part of a suspect plan. Those who broke with the organization were motivated by their desire for reforms they thought should be carried out. However, the way events turned out and the fact that the conspiring forces took advantage of what happened clouded and obfuscated matters for those conspirators who rallied their forces under those clouds. All this came close to turning out the way those who were lying in wait for the PLO had wanted.

We find that publication of this book has become essential when we carefully and cautiously observe what happened in Beirut and when we consider the attempt that was made "to discipline" the Palestinian Resistance, which held out more than it ought to have or more than it should have been permitted to. We realize that publication of this book has become essential when we see that efforts are being made to downplay the Palestinian cause and limit its problem to the person of the revolution's leader. This book is being published to affirm that this revolution cannot be extinguished and that once it spreads its wings and exercises its political and diplomatic options, it can only continue to spread those wings in those directions as it keeps its military option, the foundation and justification for its existence, viable. The military option is the only course to which the wishes of all enemies must yield. It is also that course which all factions must ultimately agree upon: those factions that wanted the armed struggle to be their first and foremost choice.

If the conspiracy to liquidate the PLO after its departure from Beirut has been growing, the reason for that is obvious. The Resistance was able to get out of its confinement in those areas where conspirators had intended to bury it. Today, the organization is bigger than it was: it is manufacturing its weapons; and it has its own navy, its own air force and its own forces of destruction. Today, the organization is again proclaiming to the world that the Palestinian people's rights to their homeland will not be usurped by anyone and their rights to establish their own independent state will not be lost.

Chapter One: Beirut and the Stolen Victory

--The Israeli attack on south Lebanon was begun through UN forces.

--Israeli academicians advised Begin not to wage war against the PLO because its political power was indestructible.

--The chief of Israel's intelligence agency wants the PLO to be divided, fragmented, weakened and unable to convene the Palestine National Council.

--In all its history Israel's radio has never broadcast round the clock except during the 3 months of the heroic resistance in Beirut.

I met one of four Palestinian Resistance leaders who were stationed with their troops in south Lebanon before the major attack that ended with the siege of Beirut and subsequently, the departure of Palestinians from Beirut.

The Palestinian leader said, "Israel's aggression was neither sudden nor unexpected. We had been expecting it every moment, and we were quite ready for it. We had not counted, however, on what happened. We were in our command in the city of Tyre when we received a dispatch informing us that Israeli tanks had entered the city." The Palestinian leader said, "I did not believe the dispatch because the fortifications were strong and impenetrable in all directions. We immediately waged a suicide war that ended with the destruction of 53 tanks. These were all the Israeli tanks involved in the attack."

The Palestinian leader then explained how these tanks had reached the outskirts of Tyre without encountering any resistance. He said, "Our fortifications and our troops were set up everywhere, except in that area leading to the place where UN forces are stationed in the south and on the road used by these forces from the coastal strip to Tyre. It's been established that the Israeli troops, all of whom were later killed, had traveled on roads designated for UN troops. The UN troops did not inform us that Israeli forces were going through the area, and the observation teams believed that these Israeli troops were only UN troops."

That was how the battle of south Lebanon began. That plus what was later revealed about U.S. involvement in that aggression, which ended with the resignation of U.S. Secretary of State Haig, are clear indications that several parties were involved in the battle in south Lebanon from the very beginning. This explains why Palestinian fighters stood alone in that battle: there was no one on their side but the Lebanese National Movement. No other Arab or foreign agency tried to help them oppose the biggest invasion launched by Israel in which, for the first time in the history of Israeli wars, all of Israel's forces were mobilized. In that invasion Israel tested the most modern and advanced U.S. electronic weapons which had never before been used in combat.

Israeli professor Moshe Ma'oz of Tel Aviv University reveals a few secrets about the war in south Lebanon when he says, "On the eve of the war in Lebanon

we had a group of Israeli academicians considering the Israeli position. We all signed and submitted a memorandum to then Prime Minister Menahem Begin in which we discussed an attempt to wage such a war. We considered such an attempt to be a grievous error because [we thought] it would be impossible now to eliminate the PLO. Although bombs may destroy its military presence, such a war would fail to destroy the political presence of an organization that has become part of world politics."

The Israeli professor added, "Army general staff officers as well as Likud Party ministers believed that a military solution would put an end to the political situation. That is why the force they used against the organization was more than five times that of the organization, and that is why they armed themselves with the most modern weapons that are unmatched in the world. But what was the result? The PLO left Beirut without a victory, but it was also not defeated. Palestinians left Beirut with their weapons and flags flying over their heads. I do not think something like that could happen to people who have been defeated. But Israel now has to learn a lesson from all this: it has to learn a lesson from the thousands of lives it lost and from the general deterioration that has befallen all facilities of life from this insane war.

Several facts can be learned from what was said by Moshe Ma'oz, a professor of strategy at Tel Aviv University. But the most prominent of these facts is this: now the PLO has a political existence that equals its military existence or is in fact more important than it is. Israeli academicians disagreed with Israel's military about whether or not putting an end to the Palestinians' military existence would put an end to their political existence. The academicians thought that the organization's political existence was the stronger of the two and that it would be difficult to put an end to it militarily.

When we associate that opinion with that of the chief of Israel's military intelligence agency, a man who said that Israel would prefer a PLO that is divided and fragmented and that has more than one national council, that can only signify that the next stage will inevitably involve efforts to put an end to the PLO's political existence. This is because it is the PLO's political existence that provides strength and protection to the organization's military existence and not the reverse.

Herein lies the danger of further development in the split among factions of the Palestinian Resistance. We do not want this breakup among the factions to cause paralysis in the PLO's political existence. Our observation of the evidence and given facts leads us to doubt that even that breakup could put an end to the PLO's political existence, now that that existence is as large as it is in most of the world's countries, organizations, agencies and liberation movements.

"Robbing" the PLO of its major victory in Beirut may have been one of the most salient attempts made to put an end to the PLO politically. It was a conspiracy to prevent the PLO from rebuilding its military.

In talking about the battle of Beirut some people do not want to use the word, "victory," because the outcome of that battle did not enable the Palestinians to stay in Beirut. Using that analogy, no one can say either that Israel's occupation of Sinai in 1956 was a victory for Israel or a defeat for Egypt. This is

because Egypt with its limited forces was able to stand up to the forces of the tripartite aggression, France, Britain and Israel. These are forces that could conquer all of Europe if they were to be mobilized against it.

It was enough that for 3 months the Palestinian Resistance, which was not in its own territory and homeland, was able to withstand advanced U.S. weapons and bombardment with different weapons of destruction from the air, sea and land. Compared with any war launched so far by Israel, that was enough for the Palestinian Resistance to have earned a victory.

--Only three times in all the history of the Zionist state did Israel's radio broadcast round the clock. The first time was for 9 days during the 1967 June war; the second time was for 11 days during the 1973 October war; and the third time was for 3 months, during the battle of Beirut in 1982.

--Never in its history had Israel ever declared a public day of mourning except on the 15th of November 1982 after the Palestinian Resistance destroyed the Israeli governor's building in Tyre killing the entire command and all staff officers as well as hundreds of soldiers who had taken part in the war in Lebanon.

--Before becoming involved in its confrontation with Palestinian guerillas, Israel was thought of in the United States and in all western countries as "a rapid deployment force" that could finish off any force or army in 1 or 2 days. But Israel lost that shiny image and distinction, which it used to boast about and with which it blackmailed the whole world. Its battle with the Resistance lasted 3 months and ended in the greatest loss of lives, ammunition, weapons and funds that Israel has so far suffered since its inception.

There are thousands of examples that show Israel's losses in Lebanon were greater than those of the PLO. Gabi Zohar, an Israeli military commentator, said that "The PLO was badly hurt in the Lebanese war, but its success in gaining worldwide recognition was greater than the damage it suffered." That statement may summarize the real situation of the PLO whose enemies tried to "rob it of its victories." Those enemies tried other methods to break up the organization. First, they did not want the PLO to have a chance to evaluate the long battle so it could not assert its right to record its heroism and assess the damage that accompanied the battle. Assessing that damage which accompanies any battle that is fought by any army in the world would have enabled the Palestinians to benefit from the experience and define what was right and what was wrong. But the PLO's enemies wanted to distract the organization and keep it from thinking about the military situation and the armed struggle. They wanted it to focus on marginal and trivial matters by magnifying errors in conduct and in administrative decisions or financial violations. They could thus split the ranks of the organization and turn people's efforts and thoughts to those that would usually induce them to take political positions, which could be contradictory and conflicting and could turn the PLO's crisis into a two-pronged crisis: a military and a political one. Thus, if both crises were to come to a head, both fronts would be damaged. The Israeli war had failed to damage both fronts, or at least it had failed to undermine the political front, the origin and source of real power and protection for the PLO.

The evil forces that had carefully devised a plan to rob the Resistance of its victory in holding out against the enemy in Beirut, so as to pave the way for hurting the PLO and putting an end to it, believed that the demise of the organization could be brought about by following one of two methods or both. The first method was to do away with the organization militarily; and the second, in case the first one failed, was to create a new organization that would declare war on the genuine organization, a war that would consume both of them.

If we were to conduct a cursory survey of the PLO's status, we would be assured that at this stage in history putting an end to the PLO militarily would be impossible for several reasons, the most important of which is the fact that Palestinians regard the organization as theirs; they see it as an organization that looks after their interests and is their sole representative. Palestinians rallied around the PLO in a manner that was so strong it would make abandoning it or maintaining silence about attempts to put an end to it difficult. Furthermore, all Arab countries without exception support it: they are concerned about its existence, and they consider it the symbol of the central Arab cause, which is the cause of Palestine. Besides these two basic factors, there is a third consideration whose importance is not less than that of the two factors: international recognition for the organization is greater than international recognition for Israel. Such recognition is extremely important because it acknowledges the fact that the people whose existence has been denied by Israel do exist. The PLO is recognized as the sole representative of the Palestinian people. To affirm the importance of this international recognition most countries of the world have bestowed upon the PLO a distinguished status: they gave it diplomatic recognition; they granted it immunity; and they allowed Palestinian embassies to be opened in the capital cities of the world. Today, the number of Palestinian embassies throughout the world is greater than the number of embassies most Middle Eastern countries have in the world. This diplomatic situation is considered a significant accomplishment for the PLO. No other liberation organization in the world has obtained such worldwide recognition and support.

Palestinian, Arab and international elements proved they had given the PLO the quality of survival and permanence when Israel, with all its might and with the advanced U.S. weapons it used in its war, failed to do away with the organization. When the PLO was forced to leave Beirut, it did not leave the way defeated people would have left. Members of the PLO left Beirut with their weapons, their belongings, their documents and their flags. They raised those flags over their heads as signs of victory, and they sang songs about their return and their liberation.

No one forgets the fact that never before in their history had Arab kings and heads of state gone out to greet anyone until that day when the commander of the Palestinian Revolution arrived in Fes to attend the Arab Summit Conference that was convened after the Palestinians' departure from Beirut. All Arab leaders went to greet the man who symbolized the Palestinian fighter. Until that day he had been calling the whole world's attention to the legend of the Palestinian fighter's lengthy resistance in Beirut.

Thus, the conspiracy to liquidate the PLO by a military operation failed. So an attempt was made to liquidate it by compromising it politically. An alternative

organization and numerous organizations would be created so that the PLO would lose its greatest accomplishment, which is the international protection it has gained. The conspirators thought that international protection would vanish if more than one organization were to appear on the scene and if more than one Palestine National Council were to be established.

Although there may in fact have been administrative, financial or organizational transgressions, with the parties to the major conspiracy taking advantage of those Palestinians who were enthusiastic about reform, thereby widening the breach within the organization, does it make sense that any Palestinian would go along with having the organization divested of the means for its own protection, namely military power and Palestinian, Arab and international support?

The Resistance Movement has had its historic leaders who would be difficult to overlook or compromise, no matter how great the dispute is among its members. These leaders know that they've had the backing and support of Palestinians and Arabs since the Resistance came into being when Arab power collapsed after the June 1967 defeat. The Arab nations, who considered the appearance of the Palestinian fighter at that stage the most honorable phenomenon in the Arabs' modern history, will not allow the conspiracy to continue. They will not yield to any of the attempts that are being made to liquidate the organization. If the organization or its leaders are liquidated, the Palestinian cause itself will most certainly be liquidated.

It has thus become evident that the conspiracy which the PLO has faced and is facing is an international conspiracy. This has been established by the fact that in the first place Israel's attack on south Lebanon was made easy by UN forces and then by U.S. involvement. Then, the United States joined Israel in planning the attack; later, it provided all the advanced materiel and weapons with which it backed Israeli troops. Now that all this has become so evident, no Palestinian, Arab or friend can condone divisions and disputes among factions of the Resistance going so far as to damage the real entity of the PLO. Today, after proving itself to be an organization that has the ability to resist, oppose, stand fast and challenge, the PLO is an organization whose elimination is being called for by imperialist and Zionist forces.

Five hundred hours to study the personality of the leader of the Palestinian Revolution.

The more we resist, the bigger the conspiracy will become.

When Yitzhaq Shamir failed to have Abu 'Ammar assassinated, he failed to win re-election as prime minister.

The president of the Republic of Maldives wrote the remarks he made to welcome the PLO chairman himself.

Abu 'Ammar's sense for security and his knowledge of military and political matters constitute his sixth sense.

The leader of the Palestinian Revolution told me, "When I was in Beirut, I saw the land around me turn into an inferno. I saw towering buildings collapse and crumble into pieces that were strewn and scattered as though the devil himself were destroying them. But when I saw the fighters' faces becoming more stern and when I saw their forearms hardening like steel, I heard them speak even though no words were coming out of their mouths. It were as though they were saying, 'We will destroy this so-called myth of Israel's invincible army.' I heard them say this even though every muscle in their faces remained motionless. It were as though they were crying out, 'The time has come for us to cut off this long arm that has been planted in Palestine "to discipline" the Middle East area and to preserve U.S. and imperialist interests'."

Abu 'Ammar told me, "I realized in the midst of this insane war, while Palestinian fighters were creating their own myth, that the more we resist, the bigger the conspiracy will become."

The leader of the Palestinian Revolution did not make this statement in an address to the masses. Nor did he make it in a statement to the press. Abu 'Ammar made that statement spontaneously in the course of an ordinary conversation. He said what he said in a manner similar to that used by all people when they discuss news of the weather, stock market prices and road accidents.

I spent 500 hours with Yasir 'Arafat over a period of 2 months. I got to know the real man very well. I broke bread with him, and I napped on the chair he used to sit on to take a nap. I used to go out with him on short walks, and I accompanied him when he met with politicians, military men and average people. I also sat in on the meetings he had with his assistants and fellow-fighters. Over a long period of time I was able to become familiar with the man's temperament and habits, and it became easy for me to tell when he was being spontaneous and when he was being guarded.

During those 500 hours I saw the leader of the Palestinian Revolution hold meetings with members of the Executive Committee, members of the Central Committee, the military council of the PLO and the fighters. I attended his meetings with Erich Honecker, the president of East Germany; Andrei Gromyko, minister of foreign affairs in the Soviet Union; the king of Malaysia; the president of the Republic of Maldives; the president of Indonesia; and the sultan of the island

of Brunei. I also sat in on Mr 'Arafat's talks with the president of Gambia, Dawda Jawara; with the president of the Goodwill Committee to stop the war between Iraq and Iran; with the secretary general of the Islamic Conference Organization; and with a group of presidents and leaders of liberation movements in the world. I also attended meetings he had with politicians and fighters in the occupied land. Mr 'Arafat considered those meetings the most important of all his meetings; to him they were highly important occasions to which he devoted all his time, his thoughts and his contributions.

I saw Abu 'Ammar, who greets fellow conferees as well as well-wishers with his well-known smile, frown and get angry when he received the ambassador of a country. The ambassador was extending to Abu 'Ammar an invitation to visit that country, but Abu 'Ammar turned down that invitation because of that country's attitude toward its people. I saw him frown and get angry when he received another country's envoy who brought him an invitation to convene the Palestine National Council in that country. However, there were conditions attached to that invitation. Abu 'Ammar turned down that country's request to convene the council there even though he desperately needed any country's approval for convening the National Council in it in the aftermath of the crisis that almost paralyzed Palestinian institutions.

I've known Abu 'Ammar for over 15 years, but my acquaintance with him was like that which any Palestinian or anyone interested in the Palestinian cause had. But it was during the siege of Beirut first and then during the siege of Tripoli after that that I got to know the real Abu 'Ammar. I began studying his personality during the 500 continuous hours I spent with him as he traveled east and west tirelessly and without tedium.

Before I got to know Abu 'Ammar personally, there was only one other person to whom I had devoted time, effort, research and inquiry and come to know quite well. That person was the only other person I wrote about in the books I wrote on the Palestinian question--about 20. This is the fighter and activist, al-Shaykh 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam. Al-Qassam's revolution was distinguished, and its victory would have been inevitable had it not been for the fact that it lacked the political support that should have accompanied the military force which al-Qassam had provided for it.

I was unable to give up my efforts to research, study, investigate and observe Abu 'Ammar's personality while the PLO was undergoing its crisis. He had become a symbol for the PLO, that organization which was able to correct and treat the mistakes of previous revolutions and build an integrated liberation organization whose military wing now complements and protects its political wing.

When I present Abu 'Ammar's profile, I present a true picture of a symbol whose personality and strength did not develop from a vacuum. It's taken many days, different months and successive years to forge those special characteristics that make up the commander's character. Despite all the clamor that is being raised around him, no one has been able to impugn his private life or his integrity, conduct or patriotism.

Abu 'Ammar, whose day may begin mornings, noons or evenings, starts his day with calisthenics. When I say he "starts his day," I do not mean he wakes up after a restful sleep. The man hardly sleeps. Those who are closest to him wonder how he

can go on for 24 hours at a time without getting a normal amount of sleep. Also, he eats only the simplest foods and in very small amounts. He does not smoke; he does not drink; and he wears nothing but khaki. He does not enjoy any of the gifts he receives: he turns them over immediately to a special department where they become the property of the Palestinian Revolution. He does not go out for a night on the town, and he has no home, wife or child. Abu 'Ammar does not have a private bank account that someone could inherit.

To put it briefly, no leader, fighter or person would willingly lead the kind of personal life that Abu 'Ammar leads. It is a life of austerity, a life of giving and making sacrifices with no expectations of rewards.

This is what Abu 'Ammar's personal life is like. As far as his life as a fighter is concerned, Abu 'Ammar spends more time on airplanes these days than he does on land. Naturally, this is not because he is fond of traveling and moving around; he does that because he feels that if the organization were to give in to the disputes that have set into some of its parts, then the major conspiracy's goal, which is to isolate it from the world and from world support for it, will be achieved. Abu 'Ammar has traveled continuously since the Palestinians' departure from Beirut, and that has been one of the most important reasons for the fact that the organization's existence and power have been maintained in world circles.

We still recall the statement made by Ariel Sharon, Israel's former minister of defense, during the siege of Beirut. The statement, which was published by THE LONDON TIMES, is the one in which Sharon boasted of having been able to put an end to the organization's political existence. At that press interview Sharon said, "A military victory over the PLO is worth nothing unless it is accompanied by a political victory. If the world perceives the organization to be alive, it would be easy for it to regain its military strength."

Abu 'Ammar realized that the Resistance in Lebanon did not pose a real threat to Israel. It was merely a base from which Israel could be disrupted, threatened and confused. The fact that the organization lost its territory in Lebanon will never be its end. Therefore, the political activity which Abu 'Ammar maintained in most world capitals foiled Sharon's principal plan of putting an end to the organization's political existence.

Before the world came to know Abu 'Ammar as a negotiator who traveled to the world's capitals and met with kings and heads of state, he became known 20 years ago in the dark quarters of Jerusalem, the towering mountains of Nablus, the narrow lanes of Hebron and the scattered plantations of Gaza. He became a well-known figure on the roads that led to Zionist settlements--the roads he used to mine--and he also became known among the refugees' huts in the refugee camps he toured, where he put up billboards on the walls calling upon the refugees to support the Revolution.

Abu 'Ammar may have also been [known as] the last person to leave a resistance position after any battle. He was also the last Palestinian to leave Beirut and Tripoli.

Abu 'Ammar's personality did not develop by accident. Everything in his being

has been forged by a history of blood, sweat and tears. I was once sitting beside him in his car as it sped through the streets of a capital city, when he suddenly asked the driver to stop the car. He had sensed that something was not quite right with the car. The driver, who found Abu 'Ammar's exclamation unusual, assured the PLO leader that everything was all right. But it turned out that there was a hole in one of the car's tires. So we switched to another accompanying car and continued until we reached our destination.

At the University of Kuala Lumpur the dean of the College of Islamic Theology was using a movie screen and projector to explain the courses of study that were offered at his college. One of the shots that appeared on the screen had a verse from the Koran that had been translated into English. Abu 'Ammar interrupted the dean of the college to call his attention to a translation error in one of the Koranic verses. The faculty admitted the error and decided not to show the film until the translation error is corrected.

One time a few weapons merchants were showing blueprints for military vessels equipped with rockets. Abu 'Ammar started talking with them about design details. I was stunned when the merchants admitted that the vessel had not been designed to carry rockets. Abu 'Ammar had taken them by surprise with his knowledge of the material that has to be available in the body of a rocket-carrying vessel.

After viewing a military parade in East Berlin, Mr (Trabin), foreign affairs chief in the German communist party, said that there may be nothing new in this parade for Abu 'Ammar because he had seen it before. But Abu 'Ammar smiled knowingly and told the German official, "I was delighted to view the parade today because I did in fact see a new weapon." The German official was surprised, and Abu 'Ammar proceeded to list the new kinds of rockets, radar devices or new tanks he had seen in the new parade.

These were some of the observations I made in the course of the 500 hours I spent in Abu 'Ammar's company. They complete the profile of the leader of the Palestinian Revolution by pointing out his powers of observation, his expertise and his experience and knowledge in various areas of security and the military.

There is no doubt that when a revolutionary's character reaches that level of development which Abu 'Ammar's character had reached, it would not be unusual for the president of the Republic of Maldives to tell the PLO chairman that he himself had written the welcoming remarks that were visible all over the island to welcome him.

It was not unusual for Prime Minister Robert Mugabe to say at the large popular rally that was held to greet the PLO leader, "Today, we welcome Yasir 'Arafat not just as a friend, as chairman of the PLO or as leader of one of the world's liberation movements. Today, we welcome a revolutionary who deserves direct credit for your revolution, your victory and your independence. He has given us direct assistance throughout the years of the struggle."

It was also not unusual when the U.S., British and West German ambassadors filed a memorandum with the Malaysian Ministry of Foreign Affairs inquiring into the significance of the King of Malaysia greeting the PLO chairman in a manner

that went beyond the rules of protocol, which were used when the heads of their own states were greeted.

It makes sense, furthermore, that Yitzhaq Shamir, former prime minister of the Zionist enemy found no other means he could use to win in the Knesset elections except that of coming up with 100 plans to assassinate Yasir 'Arafat. He wanted to prove to the voters that he could accomplish something that could reassure them about their lives and futures. When Mr Shamir failed to assassinate Abu 'Ammar, he was not re-elected prime minister.

Although Abu 'Ammar's profile has not been completed in my mind, I have to conclude these observations with a description that Menahem Begin used during the war in Lebanon. He wanted to project a certain image of Yasir 'Arafat when he said, "I will not let that bearded murderer of children slip away!"

Begin's hatred for Yasir 'Arafat was such that he would never refer to him by name. He called him "that bearded man." While 'Arafat did "slip away" from the war in Lebanon and all its conspiracies, leaving that country like a hero, that war has isolated Begin forever. He is living the rest of his life in a state of constant depression. Regarding the description, "murderer of children," which Begin tried to attach to 'Arafat, one fact has to be stated for the record. The only times I saw tears in Abu 'Ammar's eyes were those times when I saw him with children. Whenever Abu 'Ammar saw a child, he would go to that child and embrace him. I asked him once if there were moments when he felt weak. He said spontaneously, "When I see the children."

This is an unembellished profile of the leader of the Palestinian Revolution whose removal is being sought. There is no doubt that those who carefully constructed the conspiracy abroad realize that if Abu 'Ammar is eliminated, getting rid of the symbol and eventually the Palestinian Revolution itself would be simple.

Those fighters who went along with the demand for Yasir 'Arafat's removal could not have realized the real implications of the major conspiracy. Their departure from Beirut gave them a sense of defeat, and people who have been defeated usually want justifications for the defeat. When Israel was defeated in the October 1973 War, it set up for the first time a Ministry of Information to inquire into the reasons for the defeat so as to restore confidence to fighters and citizens. The Agranat Committee was formed, and two government leaders, Golda Meir and Moshe Dayan, were removed from office. But it was Israel that was defeated another time in the war in Lebanon. It wanted to find out the reasons for its defeat, and it formed an investigating committee. Ariel Sharon and a large number of military leaders were removed. At the same time U.S. Secretary of State Haig, whose involvement in plans for the war in Lebanon was proven, was also removed.

Because the war in Lebanon was greater than the Palestinian Resistance could handle and because the PLO had taken this blow as it had taken others before, it behooved all the fighters to rally around the legitimate leaders and to continue side by side on the course of common struggle. Palestinian fighters are proud of the fact that their resistance in Beirut is what created all those changes that are still affecting the Zionist state and international politics as well.

Chapter Three: Palestinian Weapons

Palestinian factories have started manufacturing R.P.G. guns, Katyusha rockets and Simonov rifles.

Palestinian navy vessels are equipped with missiles.

The Palestinian air force is protecting air space over the Red Sea and Bab al-Mandab as well as Arab air space; it has taken part in efforts to liberate a number of nations.

Political accomplishments cannot become an alternative to the military option.

Today, Palestinian revolutionary forces are using Palestinian weapons in the operations they are carrying out in south Lebanon.

At first, Mr Yasir 'Arafat seemed to be contradicting himself during his travels, interviews and meetings. He seemed to have lost his sense of direction after the departure from Beirut. When he would meet a head of state or a politician, he would discuss with him political questions and political support for the PLO. But when he would meet with his aides, assistants and fighters, he would talk with them about numbers, preparations for the long battle and everything that had to do with liberation questions.

Just as I sat in on his meetings with a number of kings, heads of state and politicians, I also sat in on part of a meeting he held with the Palestinian Military Council, with leaders of the Palestinian army and with a few weapons merchants who provide him with the weapons he cannot get from countries.

It was during some of those meetings that I learned about decisions he had made regarding appointments and promotions in ground, air and naval forces as well as transfers between them.

I had to ask him, "Brother Abu 'Ammar, do you want war or peace?"

Abu 'Ammar smiled as though he knew what was on my mind and said, "Why do you ask that question?"

I said, "When I see you engaged in discussions with politicians, it seems to me that you've become convinced that a solution to the problem can only come about by diplomatic methods. But then I notice that when you meet with military men, you make plans for battle as though that battle were going to be fought tomorrow or you expect it to be fought in 10 years. What is it that you want?"

Abu 'Ammar said, "Of course I want my country. I want to liberate the land, and I want the people to be free. I cannot ignore that solution which many of our supporters believe in. I also cannot abandon the other solution which involves being ready and prepared. I am convinced this is the only way for liberation."

Abu 'Ammar then started talking about preparations and said, "Disregarding the military option is the most serious threat that any nation in history can face. It would mean the end of that nation. But because we do have a political existence in different parts of the world--an unprecedented accomplishment for any

liberation movement--we should not neglect that accomplishment because we want the Palestinian question to be brought up at all the world's forums and meetings. The most vicious situation we have been facing is that the Zionist enemy, the United States and most European countries did not recognize the fact that the Palestinian people exist. But today, those who recognize the Palestinian people and the PLO outnumber those who recognize Israel. This is an achievement that we must preserve and protect; we must always try to develop and strengthen it.

"This political achievement, however, cannot become an alternative to the military option. We will not allow history to repeat what happened to the Abbasid Caliphate and to the legendary Red Indians in Mexico. Neither Arabs in general nor Palestinians in particular have the right to discount the military option, particularly since the only option with which our enemy has been confronting us is the military one.

"We are for a just peace, and we seek it everywhere. We will not go along with a humiliating and disgraceful surrender. The peace we are seeking can only be acquired by exercising the military option."

I said, "But speaking about the military option is one thing and exercising it is another. What is the Palestinian Revolution's attitude today toward its military option, now that, on the one hand, it is divided and, on the other, its forces have been dispersed among nine Arab capitals that are thousands of miles away from the homeland?"

Abu 'Ammar said, "When we proclaimed our revolution more than 20 years ago, we realized of course that the road ahead was not going to be easy. We knew that we would have to face horrors, difficulties and conspiracies. But it is our will to fight and to be free that will not allow us to accept the notion of doors that remain shut or borders that cannot be crossed.

"By dispersing us in nine Arab capitals, our enemies wanted to move the refugee camps from Palestinian territory to remote Arab territory. But it is the will and faith that gave rise to our revolution in 1965 that made us determined to challenge and reject that notion. There will be no more refugee camps. The refugee camps they wanted to put us in have now been turned into camps that produce heroes. No one in those camps is now carrying a food ration card. We've set up Palestinian weapons factories in those camps; we've set up air bases, armed coast guard posts and bases for ground forces that received the most modern training.

"It took us 10 years during the Revolution's early days to achieve the proper level of preparedness for our forces. Today, we have re-armed and re-trained our forces to the highest level, and we did that in less than 1 year."

Weapons Factories

Today, Palestinian weapons factories are considered to be a military achievement affirming the will of the Palestinian people and the greatness of their scientists who have so far been able to build three factories for Palestinian weapons. These factories are producing R.P.G. launchers, anti-tank S.P.G.-9 guns, Simonov rifles and Katyusha rockets.

The story behind the construction of these factories is one that has stunned everyone in the military--those who are our brothers and our friends--who visited them. No country in the world has been willing to sell the PLO a weapons factory. Therefore, Palestinian scientists who are active in the PLO assembled ordinary machines that were originally used in manufacturing pipes or aluminum or in packaging drugs. These machines were manufactured in different countries: the Soviet Union, Germany, France or Britain. Palestinian scientists redesigned and altered these machines, and they installed special computers on them. They were able to use them in manufacturing weapons, thereby eliminating the need to purchase any part no matter how large or small.

A number of Arab experts in the military industry joined these factories. These experts were sent by their armies' command to receive training in manufacturing weapons in Palestinian factories.

The weapons that are manufactured in these factories are beginning to reach fighters in south Lebanon and the occupied land. All Palestinian fighters who live in temporary expatriate camps in a number of Arab countries have been provided with the weapons they need.

Abu 'Ammar said, "The matter did not stop with military training. In fact, I am proud of the fact that our scientific committee is functioning again at full capacity. Furthermore, developments have been introduced into our own capabilities, and we now manufacture numerous military devices ourselves. At the same time we were able to coordinate our efforts with those of our partners in military operations that are being carried out in south Lebanon. We did that even though we had been stabbed in the back during that period. It is known that a decision had been made in the Executive Committee early in 1983 to have the Lebanese forces issue all military bulletins. Operations conducted by Palestinian forces were not to be mentioned. Unfortunately, that had an adverse effect on the facts. Some people thought that Palestinian fighters were no longer in Lebanon. But the fact is that their operations never stopped, and they never left south Lebanon."

Land Forces

Just as I attended the political and diplomatic meetings of the PLO chairman, I also saw the weapons industry with the commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolutionary Forces. I also saw the maneuvers of the Palestinian air force, the exercises of the Palestinian navy and the arduous military preparedness of the al-Sa'iqah Force and the ground forces.

All the different divisions of the Palestinian forces are working together on one mission. There is absolute cooperation between them and the citizens of their host country. Everywhere they went when they left Beirut was barren land which they turned into gardens and orchards. They planted all the fruits and vegetables of Palestine in that land: citrus fruits, apples and cherries. They also set up nurseries for tomatoes, cucumbers, green beans and other crops.

They built homes that are very much like model farms. When they return to answer the call of their homeland, they will leave what they built to fellow Arabs who own the land which they can farm by using the most modern farming methods.

The training and preparedness program has produced strong and sturdy bodies that have become darker and firmer. All the troops go through al-Sa'iqah's training exercises every day. These exercises entail considerable effort, fatigue and hardship. Fighters are engaged every day in new maneuvers which they conduct while carrying all their gear, which weighs from 20 to 25 kilograms at least. Fighters walk at least 30 kilometers a day. They undergo these training exercises so they can stay physically fit and maintain their combat capability. For their training exercises they choose areas located between the mountains, valleys and plains which resemble Palestinian territory. Thus, when they go back to fight they will find themselves in new positions which, to a large extent, will resemble those locations where they received their training.

Those fighters are undergoing special training in landing operations using parachutes. They are also being trained in the use of all kinds of combat and defensive weapons and in conducting direct engagement operations with the enemy. They are also undergoing special training in actions that compensate for shortages in ammunition and supplies, in procedures for evacuating the wounded and in artillery support. It may be emphasized that today these training exercises have reached an advanced stage of preparedness and organization.

The Naval Forces

Had it not been for the occasional bulletins that are issued every now and then by the Zionist enemy, no one would have found out about Palestinian frogmen and naval forces.

Gen Ehud Barak, chief of Israel's military intelligence, admitted the existence of Palestinian naval forces for the first time in a statement that was published in all Israeli newspapers on the 6th of October 1984. He said that Israel had to double its coast guard to counter attacks from Palestinian military vessels whose missions on Palestinian shores had become numerous.

Palestinian leaders have actually tried not to publicize anything that had to do with Palestinian rearmament efforts. Had it not been for my lengthy interview with the commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolutionary forces and had he not become convinced that the time had come to make this effort public, he would not have authorized my visit to a weapons factory. Nor would I have attended the ground, sea and air exercises which I was the first to report on. I published what military precautions would allow me to reveal.

Despite the fact that Abu 'Ammar is very careful about giving out only very little information about weapons, armaments and particularly the naval force, it may be said that hundreds of fighters have received and completed high-level training in different naval missions at the best military institutions in the world. Today, the nucleus of the navy includes missile boats, torpedo boats and armed boats. All this can be found in a naval base from which swift operations to Palestinian shores are occasionally launched.

When Abu 'Ammar piloted one of the vessels of the Palestinian fleet, which carries torpedo boats, he spoke to his men in a voice that was louder than the sound of the breaking waves around him. With tears in his eyes, Abu 'Ammar exclaimed, "I am beginning to see from here the shores of Acre, Haifa, Yafa and

Gaza. I am beginning to see the entire Palestinian coastline where soon you must carry out operations."

The Palestinian Air Force

U.S. envoy Philip Habib, who carried out the U.S. plan to strike the Palestinian Resistance and then get it out of Lebanon, contacted Arab countries that are far from Palestine about moving Palestinian fighters there.

The aim of the U.S.-Zionist plan was to turn Palestinian fighters into refugees and to set them up in camps all over again. These camps were to be located in countries that are thousands of miles from the homeland. Despair would thus set in, and fighters would lose their resolve. In time they would also lose all hope of fighting and returning to Palestine.

That big conspiracy, however, failed to put an end to the fighters who left Beirut. Nor could any conspiracy before that one succeed in putting an end to those fighters who are engaged in a quest for their identity and their land.

Just as the new places of refuge turned into camps for heroes and ports for launching suicide missions, they also became take-off and landing sites for the Palestinian air force.

Today, the Palestinian air force is a fact. I saw several decrees signed by the commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolutionary Forces. The longest of which was a list of appointments to the Palestinian air force for squadron leaders, supply officers and traffic, supply and maintenance officials.

In the exercise I saw in a desert location between the ocean and the Gulf, I saw the Palestinian flag flying over fighter airplanes executing their breathtaking formations in the air.

In a friendly country I saw a group of Palestinian pilots who had been invited to take part in an aerial exhibition that was being held in that country to celebrate its national anniversary. The Palestinian pilots who took part in that exhibition were described by a military attache as the most competent pilots in the world.

After the breathtaking exhibition was over, while we were on our way to a Palestinian air force base, Abu 'Ammar spoke, as pilots gathered around him. He told me, "We have passed the period of training our fighters abroad. A group of Palestinian instructors have returned to us these days after having received the highest certificates in military flight training from the oldest military institutions in the world. Today's exercise is being carried out to celebrate the graduation of 80 pilots who were trained by Palestinian instructors."

The leaders of the various forces began talking.

An air force captain said, "I completed a training course, and a number of my colleagues and I will train the fighters. I joined the Palestinian air force in 1974 when it did not have any airplanes. I've had 1,200 military flight hours. Today, we do fly for real; our flights are not part of our training or our exercises. We took part in a number of combat operations in Uganda, Chad, Nicaragua and a number of Arab countries."

Abu 'Ammar intervened at this point and said, "Palestinian fighters are considered among the most competent fighters. In 1980 our military fighters earned the gold Yugoslav medal, the highest medal granted to air force fighters. Our fighters train every day on all fronts in preparation for the promised day. But today, and ever since our departure from Beirut, they have been providing air protection over the Red Sea and Bab al-Mandab. They are protecting the skies from enemy airplanes.

Today, Palestinian fighters carry out their missions on airplanes that are not training airplanes. Today, they have the most modern fighter airplanes in the world such as the MIG-21, Sukhoi-22, Helicopter-206, MI-8 and others.

The Palestinian air force also utilizes the most modern and the most advanced radar equipment with a 70 kilometer range. Advanced missiles have a range of 60 kilometers.

The most modern military training methods are followed at the Palestinian air forces' training college. Training begins with courses of study on the ground for 1 year and a half. Students then receive flight training for 2 years. After that they graduate, having earned a degree equivalent to a bachelor's degree in military and air force subjects.

Flight training begins with light airplanes. It includes exercises in bombing targets on land as well as light aerial combat.

Pilots are classified according to their competence. Interceptor fighter pilots come first; they are followed by bombing pilots and then by helicopter and transport pilots.

Pilots go through another stage of training: they learn how to fly supersonic airplanes. They also undergo training in aerial interception maneuvers. These include instruction in aerodynamics and anti-interference automatic piloting and the use of air-to-air radar missiles and air-to-air heat missiles. They also include land approach maneuvers and machine gun marksmanship.

This training, which is carried out in all kinds of weather, includes tactical projects, aerial bombardment, bombardment with difficult maneuvers and free hunting. This consists of intercepting an enemy airplane without using radar or other communication devices.

These are the new Palestinian forces that came into being after the Palestinians' departure from Beirut: they are ready, trained and rebuilt. In fact, all this was done while conspiracy attempts against Palestinian leaders were being woven everywhere to prevent the restoration of the PLO's military strength after it was thought that its military organization in Beirut had been destroyed.

The sleepless leader of the Palestinian Revolution and his colleagues who rally around him to shield him and shield themselves from conspiracies have been working on all fronts simultaneously. They've been continuing their political activities and conducting talks to remove the causes of the breakup and restore unity to the factions of the Palestinian Resistance. They've maintained communications with Palestinian, Arab and international parties, but they did not allow

any of these reasons and justifications to delay for one minute, one hour or one day their efforts to resume building their military power and restore firmness, strength and determination to the armed struggle which has grown and expanded and become a source of pride for the world's liberation movements. It has become the backing and the power that will foil all conspiracies which have been targeting the Palestinian cause or the future of the Palestinian people.

No matter how carefully contrived the conspiracy to keep fighters far away from their homeland is, and no matter how big the conspiracy to strike the unity of the fighters is, the will of those heroes who left Beirut will remain stronger and greater so that the battle can be fought where it should really be fought. Those fighters will reclaim the motto of armed struggle as a motto for all free people until the homeland is restored to its rightful owners.

Chapter Four: The Military Option and the Rebirth of the Armed Struggle

In 1965 when it was founded Fatah was able to force Israel to file its first complaint with the UN Security Council; before that date only Arab countries had filed complaints.

Texts of the first military and political bulletins announcing the birth of the Palestinian Revolution.

The breakup in Fatah is impeding the movement's progress which will continue to be hindered until Fatah returns to revolutionary premises, chief among which is democratic reform.

'Abd-al-Nasir told Palestinians that Arab countries could not defend themselves, not to mention launch an offensive!

If we conclude from all the foregoing that the PLO will remain firmly established as an organization that cannot be disarmed, controlled or liquidated, we would realize that whatever deterrents and barriers the PLO has to protect itself are only those that it set up to safeguard its independence and its supremacy over its national decisions and maintain its permanent and continuing commitment to the principles that gave it rise.

We can conclude another fact from the foregoing: although the organization's departure from Beirut and even the split that undermined it and hampered its institutions were able to slow down its political progress, they were not able to stop the progress of its military development, nor were they able to stop its efforts to build itself and to continue preparations.

How was the PLO able to take this tremendous shake-up, which could have destroyed any country that was subjected to what befell the PLO, not to mention an organization or a liberation movement?

To find out the truth about this organization that did not rise out of a vacuum, we must go back to the beginning, to the onset of guerilla activity and the Palestinian armed struggle. It was no coincidence that the PLO was able to withstand all attempts that were made to conspire against it and liquidate it--those attempts that it has been subjected to ever since it was founded.

There is a consensus among war chroniclers that victory tends to bring about national unity: it makes it more solid and gives it firmer roots. By comparison, defeat generates disputes and divisions that in many cases end with frustration.

Just as it is normal for victors to reap the fruits of their victory with joy and happiness, it is also normal for the defeated who reject their defeat to disagree, as they go through a process of accounting for their actions, scrutinizing positions and determining errors and responsibilities. This process goes on until an agreement is reached that only one battle was lost, that the war would be a long one and that the return to the long, arduous and bitter road of the armed struggle was inevitable.

Conflicts among leaders and members of Palestinian organizations were expected

after the Palestinians' departure from Beirut, even though that departure signified neither defeat nor victory. The Palestinians' departure from Beirut simultaneously signified both defeat and victory.

The victory achieved by the Palestinian Resistance and the Alliance of Lebanese National Forces was a victory of their steadfastness and their will. They were able to score the biggest and greatest heroic stance in the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict when they confronted the Israeli army. For 3 months they held their ground against the most violent and the most modern means of electronic warfare that this army had brought to use against them. These devices had never before been seen in the history of wars in the Middle East.

Despite that victory for the will to fight and hold one's ground, the Palestinian Resistance was harshly defeated when it lost the land from which, on the one hand, it had been confronting the Zionist enemy, and, on the other, looking out at the world.

But we have to be objective here and to raise a major question to avoid giving the Palestinian Resistance more credit than it is due and placing more blame on it than we ought to. We have to ask: Is the Palestinian Resistance alone responsible for the defeat, the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, and the occupation, killing, homelessness and destruction that resulted from all that?

Was the Palestinian Resistance singled out to protect Lebanese territory and Lebanese citizens?

Where were the other Arab armies? Why did they take no action to confront the most vicious Zionist attack ever experienced in the area?

What happened to the mutual Arab defense pact that would have called upon all Arab forces to defend any inch of Arab land that is attacked?

Indeed, where were the national people's forces from the ocean to the Gulf? Where were the international liberation forces? Why did they not support their natural ally, the Palestinian Resistance and the Lebanese National Movement? Isn't the failure of Arab regimes to provide such support reprehensible?

Despite these justifications and causes, it must nevertheless be recognized that the Palestinian Resistance has been defeated and that Fatah, the largest Palestinian Resistance organization, is as responsible as its leaders are for this defeat. It must be recognized that differences and conflict between Fatah's leaders and members are healthy and normal as long as Fatah has chosen the course of armed struggle. Fatah realizes that this has to be its course against Israel and its strategic allies, the United States and all international imperialist forces. It is a long, difficult and thorny road fraught with sacrifices and bloodshed.

However, it was neither expected nor anticipated that the dispute in Fatah would turn into a split, with dissidents fighting each other and then waging a war more vicious than the long and difficult war of steadfastness against the Israeli enemy in the Battle of Beirut. This was not a conflict over democratic reform that does strengthen all liberation movements and revolutionaries. At

first, that conflict generated hostility, and people were physically eliminated. Ultimately, it may cause the Palestinian and Arab people to give up hope that their struggle can continue in the first place, and that may eventually cause the demise of the Revolution. After all the plans, wars and attacks of its enemies failed to bring it to an end, the Revolution would be brought to its end by its own people.

When the first person lost his life in the Fatah split in north Lebanon and others lost their lives after that at al-Barid and al-Badawi rivers, I was reminded of the late Ahmad Musa. His name was the first to be announced by Fatah's al-'Asifah [the Storm] in 1965 when it was first founded in our occupied homeland. Subsequently other casualties were announced: 'Awdah Salim and Salim Sa'd. They had lost their lives in the second confrontation with the enemy in Marzaya Valley. Mahmud 'Ayid and Rabi' Mansur also lost their lives in a confrontation with the enemy in the district of Hawj inside our occupied homeland.

And what a difference there is between the way those people lost their lives and the way these others did!

But as we watch the worst chapters of the tragedy unfold, this conflict among brothers and the infighting between comrades of arms threaten not only the future of this or the other group, but they also threaten the future of the PLO itself, that organization whose existence is a fact, albeit one that has been imposed on the world. The number of countries in the world that recognize the PLO's right to liberate its usurped land exceeds that of those countries that recognize the usurping country. It was then that I was reminded of that day when the guerilla fighter assumed his legitimate place in the fighters' trenches and in international forums simultaneously.

On Monday evening, the 31st of May 1965, when I returned to my hotel room in Cairo after attending the opening meeting of the second session of the Palestine National Council during which the late President Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir had delivered a rousing speech, four people visited me in my room. Muhammad Ghunaym was the only one of the four with whom I was acquainted. He gave me a copy of the first issue of AL-'ASIFAH Magazine which was published by Fatah. The magazine was dated 15 May 1965. He also gave me a copy of a statement from al-'Asifah's general command outlining its program for revolutionary action. Al-'Asifah had presented that program to the Palestine National Council which had just been inaugurated a few hours earlier.

Fellow Palestinian Muhammad Ghunaym, also known as Abu Mahir, is a member of Fatah's Central Committee. His mission that evening was to link the late President 'Abd-al-Nasir's address, which we had heard hours earlier, with the need to support the revolutionary action program which Fatah was to present to the Palestine National Council whose second session meetings had begun in Cairo.

At that time I was a member of the Palestine National Council as well as a member of the PLO's Information and Awareness Committee. The late Abu al-Hasan had also served on that committee. At that time Fatah had no clout in the Palestine National Council, most of whose members were politicians. The aim of the revolutionary action program, which Fatah adopted, was to attempt to change the council's makeup so that the majority of its members would be fighters. Representation for politicians and independents would be symbolic only.

In other words Fatah was plotting a coup in the Palestine National Council that would turn that body into a revolutionary council unlike other national organizations [and forums] such as the Arab League and summit conferences whose meetings and decisions were dominated by their political character.

Abu Mahir, his colleagues and I proceeded to review the most salient points that were made in 'Abd-al-Nasir's address. We reviewed the references he made which tended to strengthen Fatah's point of view that it was necessary to revolutionize the Palestine National Council.

'Abd-al-Nasir began his address by saying that his decision to come to the council meeting was made at the last minute. Although Kamal Rif'at was to represent the United Arab Republic at that council meeting, 'Abd-al-Nasir decided to attend the meeting to salute the council. 'Abd-al-Nasir said, "I was not planning to come, actually, but then I found it necessary to take part in your council meeting so I could tell you that we must be unequivocal. We must know where we are, and we must know where we're going. We must not restrict ourselves to cheers and exclamations about our return to Palestine. I am here to tell you that returning to Palestine is not going to be easy. The road to Palestine will be filled with bloodshed. It will be a difficult road."

Then 'Abd-al-Nasir proceeded to wonder, "How can we talk now about launching an attack when we cannot provide defense? If we were to talk now about launching an attack, we would be clouding the issue and overstating our capabilities."

'Abd-al-Nasir said, "The Arab League is the Arab League. Conferences for kings and heads of state have limited capabilities. The only way Palestine can be regained is through Arab revolutionary action. I will never give up. I do appreciate the responsibility, and I know that since Palestine was usurped with weapons and with the force of arms, it can only be regained with weapons and with the force of arms."

These were the most salient implications of the late President 'Abd-al-Nasir's address to the Palestine National Council meeting that was convened in Cairo. Fellow Fatah members placed emphasis on these points since they were setting the scene for presenting the revolutionary action program and winning national approval for that program.

But we have to ask this question: what were the most important objectives of the program that Fatah hoped would bring about revolutionary action? To provide a clear picture of Fatah's view of the liberation organization it was then seeking, we mention below the most important points that were included in the revolutionary action program.

--First, the birth of the Palestine Liberation Organization has to be linked with phasing out the period during which Palestinian action was determined by someone else. That phase when solutions to the Palestinian question were being presented exclusively by Arab officials had to be terminated. The organization's conduct will have to conform to that fact.

--Second, the Palestinian character is to be promoted internationally since Palestinians are a principal party in the Arab-Zionist conflict. The Arab people

of Palestine are the only people who have the right to determine their own destiny and the method of their struggle.

--Third, the next Palestine National Council is to be made up of leaders of the militant Palestinian People's Organization; they are to form at least two thirds of the council's members.

--Fourth, guerilla activity is to be adopted as a principal course preceding the achievement of national unity. Educational and publicity programs are to be prepared in a manner that eschews theoretical slogans and ideas.

--Fifth, the Palestinian people's organization was to be established and given a militant orientation. It was to include organized teams of armed young people and the people's resistance. That called for the Revolution's military men to contribute to the formation of this organization so as to make it continue to meet all the implications of the requirements for battle.

These were the most important points of the revolutionary action program that Fatah began to promote. It would thus bring to an end the founding stage of the PLO and the Palestine National Council whose activities were political and even tribal in nature.

But who was Abu Mahir and his colleagues? What was Fatah and what power did it have to exercise influence and bring about a change in the PLO's image, an image that all the Arab countries had agreed to?

Five months before that evening when Fatah's revolutionary action program was discussed, no one in the world had heard of Fatah or any of its leaders or its organization. However, on the 1st day of January 1965 Arab newspapers published the first statement issued by a group that called itself the General Command for al-'Asifah Troops—the Palestine National Liberation Movement. The statement indicated that that group had carried out military operations in the occupied land and that its troops had returned safely to their bases after these operations.

On the 12th, 17th and 23rd of January 1965 al-'Asifah's military bulletins numbers 2, 3 and 4 were issued. Bulletin number 5 was issued on 28 January 1965, that is, before 1 month had gone by since military operations were started. The reaction in Israel was one of alarm. On that day Levi Eshkol, the Israeli enemy's minister of defense, announced that his government would file an urgent complaint with the UN Security Council. Guerilla operations had struck fear and terror among Israelis.

Until the 28th of January 1965 it was Israel that had been attacking neighboring Arab countries, which always complained to the UN Security Council. However, the picture changed that day for the first time. This was the first time that al-'Asifah was able to force Israel to file a complaint with the UN Security Council.

That was what Fatah was like when it was founded. In its first month of life it upset the balances with the Israeli enemy and made Israelis sense danger for the first time. In its fifth month of life it shook up the traditional organization

in the Palestine National Council and in the liberation organization so it could change that institution from one that was traditional and tribal to one that was revolutionary and capable of leading the Palestinian struggle as well as the Arab and international struggle. In a matter of days Fatah would become one of the most outstanding liberation movements in the world.

In 1964 the Arabs' condition was not better than what it is today. Conflicts drained the Arabs' power and stifled the people's hopes for returning to their homeland and liberating it. During that year the government of the Zionist enemy was more defiant in the face of Arab weakness. It wanted more Arab land, and it wanted to humiliate the Arabs. The conspiracy to divert the flow of the Jordan River, which the Zionist government had begun to implement, constituted blatant aggression on Arab territory surrounding Palestine. It was a clear threat to all Arabs, and it induced the late President Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir to invite Arab kings and heads of state to meet. The first Arab summit meeting was convened to face that challenge to Arab rights in Palestine and to all Arabs elsewhere.

While Palestinians were entertaining hopes of liberating Yafa, Haifa, Safad, Acre, al-Majdal, Beersheba and Negev, the late Egyptian President Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir shattered their illusions and revealed the sad and bitter truth for the first time. He told representatives of the Palestinian people that the Arabs, who were divided by their conflicts, could not defend them, much less launch an attack against the Zionist enemy.

Palestinians realized that their reliance on Arab countries, whose power had been destroyed by their conflicts, meant they would have to wait for the sad outcome, that outcome which began with actions to divert the flow of the Jordan River.

One evening, on the anniversary of the Battle of Badr, the 17th day of Ramadan, Radio Israel interrupted its broadcast, and a Zionist announcer announced with considerable alarm that an Arab group had penetrated the occupied land and blown up the pipes that were diverting Arab waters. Arab and international information agencies reported the stirring news and announced that al-'Asifah troops had succeeded in destroying petroleum and industrial installations and that they had delayed the Jordan River diversion project. Al-'Asifah troops withdrew and returned safely to their bases after fighting fierce battles during which 12 Israelis lost their lives and 19 were wounded.

People began asking questions and wondering who that Arab group was that had become "fed up" with Arab disputes and Arab silence and abandoned the apathetic approach that had become characteristic of the Arabs in the face of continued Israeli aggression inside and outside the occupied land.

The world did not wonder for too long about that group that made Israel feel alarmed for the first time. It improved the morale of Arab peoples to the point of restoring their optimism and their hope that aggression and challenges may be confronted. It captured the world's attention, and it made the world feel that there was now someone who dared to defy Israel and say no to it.

The First Political Bulletin

The first political bulletin issued by al-'Asifah's general command stated: "To our great people, to our struggling Arab nation and to all free peoples everywhere: Those who are in the foremost ranks of our revolution, the people who believe that the armed revolution is our way to return to our homeland and restore our freedom, are products of the steadfast people on the borders and the consciences of our striving nation. They are the people who proved to colonialists and their clients and to international Zionism and its financial backers that the Palestinian people are still on the scene and that the Palestinian nation did not and will never die.

"Those people have forgotten the capabilities of this nation and its successive revolutions. They have forgotten that the Palestinian people are determined to pursue the course of armed struggle regardless of the obstacles. Palestinians will pursue the armed struggle until all the conspiracies that are contrived against them are foiled. The Zionists have planned on a prolonged stay in our country by implementing water diversion and construction projects to cultivate our good land. They are using more aggression to impose on our Arab nation their wicked de facto policy. It is because of these dangers and because time is not on our side that those in the foremost ranks of our revolution had to take quick action to bring the enemy's facilities and installations to a standstill. In doing this they relied on their own powers and on the resources of our Palestinian Arab people.

"We are declaring to the world that we are bound to our homeland's soil and its blessings. We are motivated only by our faith that this is the proper way to get our cause out of the isolation which it has experienced in past years. This does not prevent us, however, from telling the whole world that our destiny and our struggle are associated with our Arab nation which will back up our struggle materially and morally.

"We are directing this appeal to the masses of our Palestinian people, to our Arab nation and to the free people of the world. We are asking them to support the foremost ranks of al-'Asifah in their heroic revolutionary struggle. We pledge to our people that we will maintain our promise and will not put down our Palestinian arms until Palestine is liberated and restored to its rightful place in the heart of the Arab nation. Long live our Arab nation and long live free, Arab Palestine."

Al-'Asifah issued the first and a following military bulletin along with the first political bulletin. These military bulletins signaled the onset of Palestinian guerilla activity which began a process that changed the Palestinian people from an expatriate people living in camps set up by the UN Relief Agency to a fighting people who were dispersed among training camps everywhere from where they went out on missions.

"In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. Whereas we rely on God and believe in our people's right to struggle to regain their usurped country; whereas we believe we have a sacred duty to fight for our cause; whereas we believe in the revolutionary Arab's position from the ocean to the Gulf; and whereas we believe in supporting free and honorable people in the world, our

strike forces took action on Friday evening, December 31, 1964 and carried out in full the operations they were required to carry out on the occupied land. They all returned to their camps safely.

"We hereby warn the enemy not to undertake any measures against innocent Arab civilians wherever they are because our forces will retaliate with similar attacks. These measures will be considered crimes of war. We also warn all countries not to interfere in favor of the enemy in any way because our forces will retaliate for such action by exposing the interests of these countries to destruction wherever they are. Long live the unity of our people and long live their struggle to regain their dignity and their homeland."

A New Phase for the Conflict

Anyone who saw or heard the first political and military bulletins that were issued by al-'Asifah's general command realized that the movement of the Arab and Palestinian conflict against the Zionist enemy had gone into a new phase. It was a difficult phase that forced the Arab position to take a new direction, one that was quite different from that of making complaints at international forums, at the UN Security Council and at the United Nations and articulating statements about historical rights and human justice. Such statements had lost their meaning after the Zionist enemy had them trounced with his tanks which carried out attacks everywhere.

Interest in the birth of this new guerilla organization gave rise to an investigation into this movement that had remained unknown and unheard of. As the investigation continued, investigators were led to 1953 when a few young people began considering their nation's conditions. They came to believe that they too were being targeted by the Zionist plot just as it had targeted their country. In 1958 the first cell of Fatah's early founders was formed after the Tripartite Aggression on Egypt increased their conviction that armed organizations had to be established. So they began raising funds, preparing mines and making preparations for mobilizing public opinion. Early in 1959 they published a magazine called FALASTINUNA [Our Palestine], and by early 1965 Fatah had completed all its organizations, preparations and training, and it had carried out the first guerilla operation that alarmed all Zionist circles.

For 2 years Fatah was the only known secret guerilla organization. During those 2 years Fatah operated under conditions that were extremely cruel and complex because it was operating in a semi-vacuum amidst numerous attempts to cast doubts on its actions and its leaders. During the first 3 years of its existence Fatah achieved what no one had expected. It established a style of resistance and gave resistance its real meaning as the only method for liberation. It issued approximately 100 military bulletins about 350 offensive operations in the occupied land during which it destroyed tanks and armored vehicles and blew up scores of the enemy's plants and strategic positions, power stations, water pumps, trains as well as scores of bridges, dams and reservoirs.

What was more important than all these military achievements which Fatah was able to achieve in its struggle with the Zionist enemy is that it was also able to reverse the Arabs' and the Israelis' roles. Israeli complaints became the international feature of the cause since its inception, as Israel assumed the

Arab role of turning to the United States, to European countries, to the United Nations and to the UN Security Council to complain of the danger that is threatening it from the Palestinian Resistance. Fatah thus created a new shift in the Palestinian cause. In the eyes of many people that was the most important shift in the Palestinian question after 20 years of continuing Israeli aggression and incessant Arab complaints.

Israel Admits

We can find out the truth about the impact and importance that Fatah's birth has had on conditions and the upset it created in the area by referring to the fourth military bulletin that Fatah issued on 28 January 1965: less than 1 month after it was founded. For the first time Israeli newspapers began admitting to Palestinian guerilla activity which was affecting Israel and the Israelis. The newspaper, HERUT said, "Being infiltrated by Arab gangs bent on killing our people makes us mindful of how many children we have and how many individuals there are in our family. The statement that Ben Gurion made after the Sinai campaign about purging the area of guerillas has become ludicrous. Ben Gurion has to review the military spokesman's bulletin: he may learn something about the number of people who were killed in recent incidents. The number of Jews who were killed may be divided by the number of words in Ben Gurion's ludicrous statement!"

Moshe Dayan wrote an article that was published in THE JERUSALEM POST on 1 February 1965. Mr Dayan said in that article, "We are not to stand still; we have to confront the Arabs face to face. We were able to eliminate the guerillas in Sinai before, and we must do everything we can to eliminate Fatah if we want peace for Israel and its citizens."

After Israeli experts ascertained the truth of Fatah's fourth bulletin, Israel admitted that the pumps which were being used to divert the waters of the Jordan River had been destroyed in the guerilla attacks. Israel also admitted that 'Aylabun tunnel in al-Batuf plain, which is one of the stages of the diversion project, and water distribution centers in the Negev had also been destroyed. After that admission Levi Eshkol, the enemy's prime minister summoned U.S. ambassador, (Robert) Barbour and discussed with him the danger of the situation. Then Mordekhay Qadron, director of armaments affairs in Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, turned over to Odd Bull, the chief of the UN Committee monitoring the truce in Palestine, a memorandum which stated [among other things] that "Israel finds the situation on the truce lines intolerable."

Al-'Asifah's Identity Is Revealed

One month after al-'Asifah was born, no one had yet been able to find out who was its leader or leaders or who were its members. It was al-'Asifah's statements, bulletins and actions that made the following identification possible:

--First, al-'Asifah is a secret, Palestinian guerilla organization; it is a branch of a secret Palestinian organization known as Fatah.

--Second, al-'Asifah's forces have secret bases in occupied Palestine and in neighboring Arab countries. They set out from these bases toward specific targets, and after destroying their targets they return to their secret bases.

--Third, al-'Asifah's forces are carefully organized into a guerilla organization. They are divided into clearly defined groups and teams, each consisting of 10 fighters.

--Fourth, al-'Asifah uses Beirut as a center from which it disseminates its news and bulletins on its guerilla operations.

--Fifth, al-'Asifah's targets are those that have to do with diverting the course of the Jordan River. Its targets are oil centers, industrial establishments, bridges and water pumping stations. They are principal targets whose destruction would lead to the inevitable collapse of the state of gangs.

--Sixth, the method of combat between Israeli troops and al-'Asifah's troops and the fact that the guerillas are armed with the most modern light weapons indicate that al-'Asifah has been preparing itself for such revolutionary action for a long time. It was able to provide its men with the highest levels of training in guerilla warfare, and it provided them with the most modern weapons.

--Seventh, guerilla operations are not restricted to one area; they cover all Palestinian territory.

--Eighth, al-'Asifah's continued attacks despite the declaration of a state of emergency in Israel and despite tighter protection indicate tight control within the organization and the guerillas' familiarity with every inch of occupied Palestine and with everything that takes place there. The guerillas' repeated attacks indicate their total familiarity with everything the enemy is doing.

We may conclude from this that the Palestinian Revolution which broke out under Fatah's leadership had clear and specific objectives. It wanted to bring an end to the Zionist aggression against the Arab Palestinian homeland. We may also conclude that it was this revolutionary presence that shook up Israel and made it realize that Fatah was an opponent whose elimination required the mobilization of all resources and all forces. All this enables us to face a fact that no two people will disagree about. Ever since Fatah was founded, Israel has been trying in every way and with every weapon to destroy it.

Until the fifth session of the Palestine National Council was convened in 1968 and Yasir 'Arafat was elected chairman of the PLO, Fatah was not only the leading, largest and most capable organization for undertaking guerilla activity, it was also the most tightly knit organization. Relations between Fatah's leaders and members were highly organized. The actions it undertook and the combat it waged had the greatest impact and effect. Most of the other organizations, however, had been weakened by disputes and differences in points of view: splinter groups had broken up their ranks and undermined their fronts, thereby causing an intolerable increase in the number of organizations involved in the Palestinian struggle.

It has been noticed that although Fatah has maintained its cadres and its leaders, it has almost taken over the PLO. So much so that it appears to have become part of that organization. Consequently, any tremors, rifts, victories or defeats that befall Fatah are bound to affect all PLO institutions in one way or another.

Because the PLO has come out of the Beirut battle weakened, having lost its real grounds on the one hand and its heavy weapons on the other, it can no longer withstand any new tremors that would magnify its defeat and cause it to lose more weapons.

The dissension that accompanied Fatah's departure from its bases in al-Biqa' turned into a war with weapons in which all the light, medium weight and heavy weapons as well as missiles owned by the Palestinian Resistance were used. As a result lives were lost and people were wounded. Accusations were exchanged and people were called traitors, clients and subordinates. This affected all the PLO's organizations and all the Palestinian people on the occupied lands and in Arab and other countries in the rest of the world. Never before had something like that ever happened in any previous dissension movement in Fatah or in any other organization.

The gravity of what happened was not restricted to the fact that it threatened to put an end to the Fatah legend. It was also threatening the legitimacy of the PLO and the Palestinian identity. Indeed, it was threatening the continued recognition of the 1974 Rabat Conference resolutions which regarded the PLO the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

Furthermore, this dissension brought the seeds of despair to all Palestinians and all Arabs. Palestinians as well as Arabs were losing hope that the Palestinian Resistance could continue its mission after destroying its own symbols, its own achievements and its own bases and individuals, when Israel and all the forces conspiring with it had failed to do any harm to those ideas that had firmly established the identity and existence of the Palestinian people as well as their right to fight to liberate their country and establish their Palestinian state.

There is no doubt that the dissension in Fatah, which is jeopardizing its future today, may cause the destruction and demise of that organization which was famous one day as a prominent landmark in the history of the armed struggle. Israelis used to be scared and terrified out of their minds whenever they would find a flyer in Hebrew attached to one of their front doors or to the door of one of their stores or offices which said, "Al-'Asifah was here!"

But if we wanted to look carefully at what happened and explore the real reasons for that dissension which almost destroyed that organization which everyone was counting on to become a streamlined force, we would find that several factors helped protect that organization. Fatah may have been the most prominent of these, and the makeup of the Resistance in general may have been another.

Anyone who wants to look closely at the makeup of the Resistance will find that Fatah was founded as a national coalition that believes in the armed struggle as a means toward liberation. It had not set forth a specific, social, political or ideological view. It may thus be said that Fatah's leaders and cadres were a mix of people who believed in the armed struggle. Some of them had leftist tendencies; some had rightist tendencies; and there was another group of independents.

Because they could be found in different Arab countries, some of the organizations or factions of the Resistance came under the influence of these Arab

countries, which, in turn, had continuous disputes with each other. That is something that can neither be ignored nor denied. These disputes and conflicts eventually affected relations between the organizations and even relations between factions within each organization.

Because Fatah is the largest organization in the PLO and the one with the largest number of tendencies and the largest number of contacts and relations, it was threatened by such tendencies and outside independent opinions cropping up in its various factions. That is what actually happened in the recent dissension.

Fatah's leaders had taken all kinds of precautions to guard against that from the very beginning. They took precautions to guard against outside factors having an effect on their solidarity and their internal organization. To avoid such armed dissension Fatah had defined [certain procedures] in its revolutionary premises and in its organizational action programs. But it seems that the conditions of the present stage were more compelling than Fatah's charter and had more influence [on the dissidents] than all its traditions, instructions and commitments.

After the 1967 Israeli aggression Fatah sensed that the principal responsibility for the armed struggle will fall on guerilla activity. It wanted to carry out an operation by which its organizations, factions and cadres could be controlled and tightened. In 1969 it issued a statement whose aim was to guard against Arab intervention in guerilla activity.

In that statement Fatah stated, "When one takes a realistic look at the Arab countries' conflicts and at their different points of view and attitudes toward the Palestinian cause, and when one considers that some of these countries have tried to draw Palestinian groups to their sides or create them in their midst, it becomes quite clear that the Arabs of Palestine have to have united leaders and a united organization. This is indispensable to the struggle and is required for the integrity of guerilla activity. It is required for Fatah's future and for its ability to withstand aggression, to rise above maneuvers and provocations and to face attempts to hurt it through independent efforts, opinions and conflicting positions."

At the same time Fatah published a pamphlet that discussed the slogan, objectives and premises of the revolutionary movement. The pamphlet talked about dissension attempts in the ranks of the Resistance.

The pamphlet stated, "We regard anyone who considers setting up a new organization to be involved in destructive activity against the Palestinian Revolution. Such organizations will by their very nature constitute a tool that can be exploited by anti-revolutionary forces."

Having cited the rules upon which Fatah had established its armed revolution and its command of the struggle and liberation efforts, we return to the recent dissension which almost reduced all of Fatah's history, glory, struggles and efforts in promoting guerilla activity to a defeat for this giant organization, burying its history away from the land where it had fought and struggled: in the far north, in Tripoli, in al-Badawi Camp and in al-Barid River Camp.

If the legitimate Fatah does not gain victory in this destructive war, it will be impossible for the world to accept or believe that Fatah itself, which did issue its first political and military bulletins on the first day of 1965, was that same organization that is coming back today to lead the armed struggle to liberate Palestine.

If all Arabs and Palestinians fail to prevent "the slaughter" of an organization that gave the world the only solution to national liberation movements in the world--which is the course of armed struggle--historical leaders who established the revolutionary premises of the Palestinian Resistance may not, regardless of their positions and their inclinations, give in to the conspiracy that is being carried out. The aim of that conspiracy is to have Fatah members themselves killing each other to bring an end to Palestinian action. The end of Palestinian action is something that is still being sought. In fact, it is the only thing that Israel and all the countries insisting on its preservation want.

The Lessons of Defeat

If the defeat in Beirut were actually the reason for this infighting, and if despair and hopelessness induced these liquidations, then what we need most is to go back to the history of our defeats so we can learn from them all the lessons, experiences and counsel we need. We would realize that the worst defeat that befell the Arabs was their defeat in June 1967. Egypt bore all the effects, wounds, disasters and consequences of that defeat. Nevertheless, there was no coup and there was no infighting in Egypt. Instead, a strong and faithful will to reject despair was generated. Egyptians rejected defeat, and Egypt began to prepare itself for the next round of combat. Had it not been for the death of the late Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir, the outcome of the 1973 Ramadan War would have been different.

A final word: As we say, "What a shame it would be if Fatah members were to bury their own organization with their own hands and weapons," what we want to say is that if Fatah members still believe that the armed struggle is the only way to liberate Palestine, then they have to remember what 'Abd-al-Nasir told their leaders in 1968. 'Abd-al-Nasir said, "If we cannot defend ourselves, how can we talk about launching an attack?" That statement still holds today!

All the Arab countries are still complaining about their inability to defend themselves. How then can they launch an attack? However, just as circumstances and conditions in Arab countries changed after unified guerilla activity led by the legitimate PLO with the historic support of Fatah was launched in the first phase of the armed struggle, they can be changed again. However, neither the national situation nor the Palestinian method of armed struggle can be corrected unless the leaders and cadres of the historic armed struggle movement return to their positions, assume their responsibilities and launch a new initiative in the face of all conspiracies. Today, these conspiracies come in more than one shape, in more than one language and in more than one style.

This is the Palestinian Resistance Movement that started out from an integrated revolutionary program. While its political wing is trying to establish institutions and gain Arab and international recognition, its two wings are working together and pursuing the one and only option: the military option. The

Palestinian Resistance is pursuing a military option to confront an institution, a society and a state that is adventurous, aggressive and racist and is pursuing only one option, namely the military option.

The dissension, the uprising or the corrective movement cannot take action or correct matters if it does not turn to the revolutionary premises upon which the Resistance movement has been based. The first of these premises is that of democratic reform through legal institutions. Anything other than that one and only road to democratic reform would create obstacles and impediments in the face of the organization's revolutionary plans to rebuild its military and political organization forcefully, willfully and with determination. The organization can thus impart to its departure from Beirut the real significance of that happening, and it can turn the course of armed struggle to that of liberation.

Chapter Five: For the Land

Israelis built 254 settlements, and they will build 58 new ones.

A message from the heroes in the occupied land to the dissenting leaders of the Resistance abroad.

Conditions for reconciliation that are impossible to meet constitute a conspiracy to do away with the Resistance.

A Jewish rabbi prods others to kill every Arab man, woman and child.

Kahana is a member of Moussade, and he operates in accordance with a long-term Zionist plan.

We may conclude from all the foregoing that the PLO is being subjected to the biggest conspiracy it has ever experienced. The aim of this conspiracy, which was put into operation after the PLO's enemies became convinced that the organization is bigger and more powerful than they thought or estimated it would be, was to liquidate it and put an end to it. We may have also become certain that the PLO has paid a hefty price for its heroic steadfastness in Beirut: its struggle and its continuing preparations and efforts to be prepared have been impeded. And yet, it remained steadfast and strong, providing the best practical evidence that containing, controlling or liquidating it would be impossible. Having learned all this from the foregoing, we must wonder again about the reason for the PLO's power. We must wonder what caused it to come into being and what is the justification for its existence and survival.

The organization was not founded to add a new party to Arab parties or to add a scouting team to the muscle-flexing movement that spreads itself from the ocean to the Gulf. The first and foremost objective behind establishing the organization is the land: to liberate the usurped homeland.

If we wanted to make a simple comparison regarding what the Zionist enemy does to further his occupation and tighten his grip on Palestinian citizens in the occupied land, we would find that the enemy confiscates Arab land, builds settlements all over the occupied homeland, intensifies his attacks and tightens his conspiracies whenever he finds an opportunity to do that. The enemy finds that opportunity when Palestinian organizations are preoccupied with their own disputes or with marginal disputes they may have with a fraternal country or nation.

These harsh cases that the PLO experienced during the past 20 years enabled the authorities of the Zionist enemy to implement the broadest settlement project ever, and that is threatening the daily lives and even the futures of Palestinians in occupied Palestine.

Official Israeli statistics state that the number of settlements so far built in occupied Palestine and in the Golan Heights is 254. On the West Bank there are 171 civilian settlements and 16 military settlements; in the Golan there are 33

civilian settlements and 5 military settlements; and in the Gaza Strip there are 19 civilian settlements and 9 military settlements.

The establishment of settlements was preceded by confiscation of Arab land. On the West Bank over 2.2 million donums of Arab land were confiscated; that is over 40 percent of the land in the West Bank. In the Golan 60 percent of the land was confiscated, and in the Gaza Strip 37 percent.

The Zionist settlement plan, which is now being implemented, also affirms that Zionist occupation authorities will build 58 new settlements on the West Bank, 14 in the Gaza Strip and 11 in the Golan.

When we realize that the new settlement offensive was planned while disputes were going on among Palestinians, we realize the importance of a united Palestinian rank, a united Resistance and the national appeal that is calling upon all parties to forget about their marginal disputes. No matter how considerable the implications of these disputes are, they ought not to affect the steadfastness of the Palestinian people in the occupied land. Nor should they be a reason for stopping resistance operations in the occupied land. The Zionist enemy is not to be given an incentive to take the Resistance lightly and continue his aggression and criminal conduct.

A Message from the Occupied Land

Israelis enjoyed a long respite one day recently. It started when the Palestinian Resistance left Tripoli and Lebanese territory and ended early in April 1984.

The Israelis' respite lasted for several months during which they devoted themselves to making preparations for the democratic game they play so well whenever and wherever they choose.

With the composure that is always characteristic of people enjoying such a respite, the Israelis devoted themselves to the task of arranging the conditions of their parties. They laid out their future plans in whose light they would embark on the election campaign for the Knesset. They began vying with each other, proclaiming slogans for their election campaigns which they regarded as having one objective: how to achieve an Israeli peace that would realize all the ambitions of the Zionist movement, seize everything on Palestinian land and gradually get rid of every Palestinian.

With the sense of joy that is characteristic of such respite periods, the Israelis were observing and watching Arab and Palestinian mediation efforts which were trying to bring Resistance leaders together and find a minimum formula for accord and agreement. Their sense of joy would grow and spread whenever they were assured that disputes among factions of the Palestinian Resistance were growing and becoming deeper and that all attempts being made to reconcile them were failing. None of the explanations that was offered to determine what actually gave rise to the dispute and dissension provided a satisfactory answer or certain knowledge as to the reason why everybody had been sidetracked from the most sacred cause and involved in this dispute.

Israel's leaders were, of course, boasting about being able to achieve their objectives in all their military campaigns in Lebanon which, they alleged, brought an end to the existence of the Palestinian Resistance.

It was regrettable that Israel's bragging and boasting went unanswered by Palestinian leaders who were spread out in all the Arab capitals making random accusations against each other. That gave the impression, even to Palestinians, that their factions had actually been defeated following their departure from Tripoli and the rest of Lebanon. Thus, the conspiracy, whose first accomplishment was to steal the victory of heroic steadfastness achieved by the Resistance in Beirut, succeeded.

Suddenly, the silence was broken: voices were being heard, and there was utter confusion. The world then knew that Israel's respite had come to an end and that the alleged game of democracy would no longer be played. The world knew that the Palestinian Resistance had not expired when faction leaders had disagreed and immigrated to various Arab and non-Arab capitals.

Shots were fired on Yafa Street in Jerusalem announcing that the time had come for Israel's respite to end. The shots were a proclamation that Resistance leaders no longer had the right to continue their disputes; they had to make guerilla activities outside the occupied land work for the cause.

Then an Israeli bus was hijacked with its 45 passengers. The bus, which was en route from Tel Aviv to 'Asqalan, was diverted to Rafah. This operation was tantamount to another proclamation that the course of events inside the country and abroad was being altered.

The bus hijacking operation which was carried out by a Gaza group, named after the late Guevara, diverted the bus and took away every Israeli's tranquillity, assurance and peace of mind. It also took away the arrogance, disdain and defiance each Israeli felt and projected to every Palestinian or Arab. The Israelis were proud of the victory they had achieved over Palestinian fighters and the breakup they had caused among the fighting factions.

This heroic operation, which undermined the convictions of all Israelis, did the opposite for all ideas about living and struggling that Palestinians subscribe to. It gave new meaning and new significance to historical facts that cannot be ignored. Its message, written in the blood of those who had lost their lives on the soil of the homeland, corrected the process of sacrifice and struggle and taught everybody that ever since the very beginning, the Zionist Movement had encroached upon the rights of Arabs and Palestinians by contriving disputes and divisions in their midst.

Whether those who "nudged" faction leaders when they fired shots in Jerusalem or diverted the Tel Aviv bus to Rafah were from Fatah, the DFLP or the PFLP is immaterial. None of them was representing this organization or that faction in that courageous operation. What was done was done on behalf of all Palestinians.

The people who carried out that operation did not want to send their message to those who were assembled in the Knesset looking into new conspiracy plans

against the Palestinian people. Nor did they want to send their message to those who specialize in carrying out settlement conspiracies, confiscating land and subjugating our people in the occupied land. They wanted to direct this message to guerilla leaders abroad: in Damascus, Tunisia, Algeria and Aden. They wanted to direct their message to those leaders who were disagreeing about "formalities" that will not stop a new settlement from being built and cannot protect a Palestinian from the oppression of Israeli jailers. They wanted to tell those leaders, "Once you agree to fight and struggle inside the occupied homeland, you may then disagree as much as you want on everything else."

If we were to look carefully into the message that was sent by the heroes of the Jerusalem operation and the heroes of the Guevara Gaza operation--a message they wrote with their own blood--we would come out with the following facts:

First, the people who carried out both operations are residents of the occupied land where they have been living for a long period of time. They speak Hebrew fluently, and this confirms the fact that guerillas, fighters and revolutionaries can be found abroad and inside the country as well.

Second, these two operations revealed the truth about the Israeli people who appeared to be alarmed, terrified and confused. Everyone saw that on television news broadcasts, and that confirmed the fact that although we were facing the most modern and advanced weapons that Israeli soldiers were using against us, we were also facing a cowardly nation that could be easily overcome and defeated if guerilla operations were to continue inside the country.

Third, immediately after the two operations occupation authorities distributed more weapons and ammunition to the settlements and declared a state of alert there. They also called up the civilian reserves in all cities, villages and settlements. These immediate measures reflected the real state of concern, fear and terror that the Israelis are living in as a result of only two military operations.

Fourth, the immediate reactions that were provoked among blocs of the electorate who tried to take advantage of these operations provided evidence that to the Israelis their internal security was everything. They are willing to do or give up anything to preserve that security which they want.

Let us go back to those Resistance factions that are feuding or fighting. Let us tell them that the absence of guerilla activity inside the country is the only thing prodding the Israelis to continue the challenge, to carry out the settlement plans, to confiscate land and to reject all international initiatives to find a just settlement and solution to the Palestinian question and withdraw from occupied territory.

It is the absence of armed action inside the country that is forcing our steadfast people to go through stages of despair, hopelessness and indignation with the Arab nation and progressive forces in the world that relinquish the effort to rescue and liberate them.

We must take our memory back to the onset of the occupation in 1967 when military authorities on the scene tried to build the Qiryat Arba' settlement in

Hebron. They were unable to build that settlement for 3 years because there were bases for fighters inside the country. They were not able to put up a single brick to build 'Qiryat Arba' until they put an end to guerilla activity there.

The heroes of the Jerusalem and Rafah operations sent a message to Resistance leaders saying that the heroes inside the country were alive and waiting for a signal to take action. They are waiting for a unified plan, a unified front and unified action. They gave evidence that one operation can strike terror in the heart of the occupied homeland and that one operation can be more effective and has more impact than 1,000 revolutionary bulletins and 1 million rousing addresses. One operation can have more impact than all the meetings that find fault with this leader or that faction.

Those heroes gave evidence that the key to the cause--the key to returning the country to its owners--lies in their hands, the hands of those who operate inside the country. The country will never be restored to its owners by initiatives, mediation efforts or conferences; nor can all the political and peaceful solutions restore the country to its owners.

Israel's Real Strength

It is here that we come to the question that is being raised today about the central question and about crucial questions. Has the inter-Palestinian dispute become habitual and chronic, delaying and impeding all kinds of opposition and confrontation? Is it also delaying and impeding preparation and readiness efforts for facing dangers and disasters and standing up to challenges and fears? Has the inter-Palestinian dispute turned into something like the inter-Arab disputes which are the first and foremost reason for how far the Zionist enemy has gone in his aggression? Inter-Arab disputes are the first and foremost reasons for the arrogance with which the Zionist enemy commits his violations. They are the reason why Zionists continue to establish themselves and their organizations firmly on our country's soil and over the dignity and ruins of our people.

We have been saying and affirming that Israel's strength does not lie in its advanced weapons, in the steely will of its leaders or in the accuracy of its aggressive plans. Israel's real strength lies in the inter-Arab disputes that have allowed all those with ambitious designs to act freely on the battlefield and foreigners to do as they pleased with impunity, undeterred by those who believe in their affiliation, their origins, their heritage, their religion and the sanctity of their country's soil.

We used to blame inter-Arab disputes for the disappointments that we've had: we lost our land and country; our nation became homeless; and our heritage and civilization have been humiliated. We used to say that it was inter-Arab disputes that impeded the most important ingredients for confrontation, namely unity of rank, unity of opinion, unity of objective, unity of strength and a sense of common destiny.

But what are we to say today when the Arabs's reality is about to become the Palestinians'? Indeed, what will be the consequences and outcome for us if inter-Arab disputes have led us to this? What will happen to our future if

inter-Palestinian disputes have been struck by the same cancer and plague that will destroy the Palestinian entity, which is supposed to be the vanguard for our struggle and our fight? What will happen when these malignancies impede the resistance and opposition components that are left to this nation to oppose the most vicious plan whose aim is to wipe out Arab civilization and the Islamic heritage as well as the Palestinian people from every inch of its ambitious designs and plans?

There is no doubt that the threat posed by inter-Palestinian disputes to the Palestinian cause and to the continued existence of the Palestinian people is greater than that posed by inter-Arab disputes which we hold responsible for our ill fate today. They also have a greater impact and are more bitter than inter-Arab disputes.

There is no crime that an Arab can commit today that would be greater or graver than that of exacerbating inter-Palestinian disputes. Those who are encouraging those disputes or who are not trying to remedy and settle them are either working for the Zionist plan and being paid for what they are doing, or they are working for that plan without receiving payment.

Dividing the Arab world in its entirety and sowing the seeds of sedition among its regimes, institutions, parties and peoples are important to the Israeli plan. But it is many times more important to that plan to divide the Palestinian ranks. This is an effort to which much more attention and effort have been devoted and for which more funds and rewards have been earmarked. By dividing the Palestinian ranks the Israeli plan is assured that the battle will be brought to an end. It could then proclaim its historic victory over the area.

Even before 1970 Israel had dispatched all its armed forces after Palestinians in the Jordan valley to divide their ranks. Then it pursued them in south Lebanon, in Syria, all over Lebanon and in all the capitals of Europe. The results were always favorable to the Palestinian Resistance: it came out stronger and more solid than it was before because its leaders and its rank and file were united.

Israel then dispatched its armies inside the country, and it put its plans to work in the occupied homeland. It tried to create representatives for the Resistance; it tried to recruit spies; to set up a civilian administration; and to organize militias, boards and leagues for villages so it can break up Resistance ranks. But Israel failed to achieve any of its objectives, and the PLO came out of every one of Israel's attempts and conspiracies stronger and more solid than it was before, thanks to the unity of its leaders and its rank and file.

Conditions That Cannot Be Met

Quite unexpectedly, however, Israel achieved everything it had been striving for and trying to achieve for 18 years. The Palestinian ranks became split unexpectedly, and signs of disputes began to appear. It were as though Israel itself or one of its agents were behind these disputes because so far it has been impossible to find a way to end them. These disputes become completely and totally unjustifiable once we are certain that ultimately they will serve nothing but Israeli plans.

Every day we hear about a meeting being held in Damascus, San'a', Aden, Algeria, Tunisia or 'Amman to look into inter-Palestinian disputes so as to settle them. Then we hear that one group is setting conditions that cannot be met!

There are facts that every Palestinian must know about, and there are incidents that must be accepted by everyone who carried a rifle and who is interested in keeping that rifle until dignity, justice and truth are achieved.

This glaring fact and those incidents that no two people will disagree about may constitute a realization that the first, principal and foremost reason for those inter-Palestinian disputes which have been growing and threatening Palestinians and the Palestinian cause is not the unilateral command, the visit to Cairo or the excesses and violations that were committed during, before or after the siege. The real reason for these disputes is the independence of the Palestinian decision making process.

The inter-Palestinian dispute cannot be solved by writing petitions and gathering signatures on these petitions. Also no group can get the upperhand over another by holding a discussion, a meeting or a conference to support one tendency or to challenge a specific decision or measure. These methods which have been followed by some Arab regimes have led to nothing but disasters; they've exacerbated differences and added fuel to the fires of those carrying weapons.

It thus becomes evident that we are faced with only two facts.

First, existing disputes can serve no purpose but that of Israeli objectives.

Second, the real reasons for the dispute cannot be dealt with unless the real question is set forth, and that is the freedom of the Palestinian decision.

Differences in points of view are not new in the PLO. Charges of a totalitarian command were leveled during more than one stage. In fact, these charges were made by a number of factions at the first Executive Committee that was formed by the organizations. Nevertheless, it was always easy to find solutions that all factions found satisfactory.

Differences over political premises did not emerge when Yasir 'Arafat visited Cairo and met with President Husni Mubarak, which some people considered an unforgivable mistake. There were differences over numerous political premises, the most prominent of which may be that of setting up dialogue with Jewish figures and organizations. But despite the controversy that was raised over these premises, the differences were never such as to expose the PLO to the danger of dissension.

When there is no dissension among Resistance ranks when an agreement is reached to meet with Zionist figures, no one can believe that calling for the overthrow of 'Arafat because he visited Cairo is the real reason for the dispute.

What must be reaffirmed is that Israel is the only beneficiary from existing disputes between PLO factions. Not one Palestinian can find justifications for these disputes, and no reasonable person can believe that they were caused by 'Arafat's visit to Cairo or by unilateral decisions.

The appeal we are making to everyone to overcome the Palestinian predicament is not being made to keep Yasir 'Arafat as leader. We are making that appeal because we realize that Palestinians in the occupied land have declared unequivocally that the conspiracy to which 'Arafat is being subjected has been planned by Zionists. No Palestinian--indeed, no one--can forget the fact that Abu 'Ammar was the last person to leave the trenches in the battle of al-Karamah and in the sieges in Beirut and Tripoli.

Faction leaders, especially leaders of the three principal factions, Fatah, the PFLP and the DFLP, are faced today with the historic responsibilities of rescuing the Palestinian effort by establishing a common united front for those who believe in the independence of the national Palestinian decision. They are to do everything to prevent the inter-Palestinian dispute from becoming a tool that can be used to abort the Revolution, undermine its strength and frustrate nations in the way that inter-Arab disputes did in the past. It was these disputes that made the foreign Jews appear to the world and to us as though their self-sacrifices, their deprivations, their sternness and their self-denial were legendary.

Land and the War for Land

When Yitzhaq Shamir called upon Jordan to join the peace talks when he was prime minister of Israel, the printing presses of the United Hame'uhad Kibbutz were coming out with a new edition of "Gush Emunim," a book written by two Zionist writers, Shlomo (Brach) and Emanuel (Bihuksi).

When we recognize the significance of Yitzhaq Shamir's invitation to Jordan to join the peace talks, we will recognize an astonishing fact. We will realize that the Zionist movement's leaders and thinkers think that the Palestinian question has now come to an end in their favor and that the Arabs will have to try and rescue whatever they can outside the borders of Palestinian territory.

When he invited Jordan to join the peace talks, Yitzhaq Shamir made it clear that negotiations would be restricted to two questions only: first, stimulating tourist travel between Israel and Jordan; and second, preserving water sources so as to guarantee both countries better farming and better industry.

This means that Yitzhaq Shamir thinks of Jordan as a country that has nothing to do with the West Bank or with the Palestinian cause and that it has to negotiate matters that have to do with confiscating water. This invitation does, of course, imply a clear and an unequivocal threat that Israel is still making plans to seize the water sources of the Jordan River. One year ago Israel began violating the 1949 truce agreement when it installed pumps to draw the waters of the Jordan River to irrigate land on the West Bank of the river whose cultivation is prohibited. These violations imply that Israel is continuing to take more water and that it may end up either diverting the waters of the Jordan River or depleting them.

That threat also indicates that Israel is implementing a project to build a canal from the Mediterranean Sea to the Dead Sea to raise the water level of the Dead Sea so it can inundate farm land in the Jordan valley. It would also inundate Arab potassium plants which are considered one of the most important sources of revenue for Jordan and its biggest national industry.

Just as Yitzhaq Shamir's invitation to Jordan implied a threat to Jordanian water sources, it also implied an incentive for stimulating tourism. This would give the impression that Arabs have to accept the status quo. They have to forget something called Palestine; they have to forget that Palestinians are entitled to a homeland and that they have a right to determine their own destiny.

The statement made by the former Zionist prime minister, in which he defined negotiations topics and a method for peaceful solutions, was compatible with international efforts aimed at finding a new formula for peaceful solutions that would guarantee Palestinians their national rights and restore peace to the area.

Of course, when Yitzhaq Shamir chooses this time in particular to set the schedule for his invitation to Jordan to negotiate, his unequivocal intention is to send a message to all Arab and international parties to tell them that peaceful solutions will be reached at the expense of Arab countries. However, the fundamental question--namely, the problem of Palestine--is something that Shamir thinks remains outside the framework of these negotiations. Because of the status quo, Shamir thinks the Palestinian question has become either forgotten or closed.

So much for Yitzhaq Shamir's invitation, or more specifically, so much for the message that Yitzhaq Shamir sent to Jordan and the world. The implications of that message clouded prospects for all attempts that were being made to revive talks about Israel's withdrawal from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip or even talks about peaceful solutions that involve occupied Arab land.

As far as "Gush Emunim," is concerned, the book provides details about Zionist ideas, plans and mental attitude. It also provides insights into the real Zionist view of the Palestinian question and Palestinians. In fact, it goes beyond the Palestinian question and beyond the Palestinian people.

The book relates the story of the 1967 war, which it describes as a war over land. Although the book reviews the conditions and stages under which the Gush Emunim movement of settlers was established, all the research is devoted to the question of land, the war and the conflict over land, all of Palestinian land.

The book contains astonishing details that in the 20th century could happen nowhere else but in a criminal society: in Israel.

In the first chapter of the book the two authors relate details of the early hours of the 1967 Six-Day war. The first 10 pages record incidents of the visit that the Israeli army's rabbi, Shlomo Goren made to the settlement of (Kfar Eziyon), located between Jerusalem and Hebron. These first pages also record Rabbi Goren's address to the soldiers who were charged with the task of occupying Hebron.

This is what the two authors had to say about this visit: "While one army unit was getting ready to go toward the city of Hebron before dawn, Rabbi Shlomo Goren arrived on location. The commander of the military unit stood up and requested that engines be turned off so that the rabbi's address could be heard.

The rabbi began his address by saying, 'Show no mercy to the killers: the men, women and children.' Quoting the Torah, he said, 'Remember what the Amalekites did unto you!' The Amalekites were an Arab tribe that had settled in the Negev over 2,000 years ago when the Israelites left Egypt and wandered aimlessly in the Sinai desert. The Amalekites then opposed them and made them go back to the place they had come from.

The rabbi said, "We 'liberated' Jerusalem hours ago; we liberated the Home on the Mount, al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock." He directed his appeal to soldiers as he quoted from the Torah: "Vent your wrath on foreigners." "May your enemies be dispersed." "May God divide and disperse them."

Then the rabbi said, "In 1948 your people were slaughtered here in Kfar Ezion, and in 1929 your fathers were slaughtered in Hebron. Therefore, show them no mercy; show no mercy to any man, woman or child."

The two authors described the reaction aroused by the clergyman's address among soldiers who were ready to occupy a peaceful city. Not a single bullet was fired against the invaders because the people had a sense of the alarming defeat that had befallen the Arab armies.

The book, "Gush Emunim," ends by stating that soldiers did not follow that day the recommendations of the Jewish clergyman, the army's Rabbi Goren. Instead, they returned to that same place several years later, on 15 February 1974 to be specific. That was 7 years later. It was then that they recalled the words of Rabbi Goren and declared the establishment of an organization within the religious Mifdal Party. It was then that they began their real war, the war for land, and they began doing everything they could to seize what they believed was "all the land of Israel" inside or outside Palestinian territory.

If we were to go back to 1949, to the text of the address delivered by Israel's representative to the Lausanne Peace Conference, we would find that Israel had defined its objectives a long time ago. At that international conference Israel's representative said in the presence of representatives of Arab countries, which had approved the truce agreements, that Israel wanted to take part of southeast Lebanon for itself because it was considered essential to its development projects. Israel's representative also said that Israel had the right to get the Gaza Strip which had been given to the Arabs in 1947 by the Partition Resolution.

When we try to rationalize Yitzhaq Shamir's invitation to Jordan to join the talks with Rabbi Goren's appeal to the invading soldiers to "Show no mercy to any man, woman or child!" and with the address by Israel's representative to the Lausanne Peace Conference in 1949, which showed that Israel was making plans to seize the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and south Lebanon, we find ourselves looking at a blurred picture of opportunities for peace which some international circles are trying to hint at these days.

Israel's leaders--its rulers, clergymen or young people--lead their lives in occupied Palestinian territory on the basis of malicious assumptions, a criminal mental attitude and a Nazi, Fascist tendency. They see only one side of the

coin. They do not see the Palestinian people's right to their homeland, and they do not mention the attacks and massacres they committed. They do not mention the fact that they drove every Arab out of his home, farm or factory by force. Nor do they mention the massacre at Dayr Yasin, at Qabiyah, al-Sumū', 'Amwas and on every inch of Palestinian territory.

That side of the coin is one that today's rulers and clergymen and young members of Fascist Zionist organizations do not see. They look at one side of the coin only: the side they believe. They believe there was a confrontation with them in 1948 and that a few people lost their lives in 1929. They trace their hatred back 2,000 years, and they remember that the Arab tribe of Amalekites defended itself in the Negev. They remember that the Amalekites were able to defeat them and make them retreat and that they were unable to seize the Amalekites' land and their source of livelihood.

If this is what those who are in power in the Zionist state believe and if that is also their style of imposing their existence at other people's expense, then Arabs, or rather the whole world, will have to realize how much danger the area is facing now that solutions lie in the hands of gangs that speak no other language but that of killing, destruction, terror and seizing land.

Whereas the world has to realize that fact, it certainly behooves the PLO to realize it first. The breakup and fragmentation of the PLO increase Israel's greed for everything. The PLO has to realize that Israel proclaimed the slogan of war for land and that this slogan can only be foiled by an underground war.

Official Terrorism

Those who watched the terrorists' trial--the trial of Jewish settlers on the West Bank--and who kept up with the sentences that were issued by Israeli courts against them believe that there is now in Israel a new tendency to punish people who attack Arabs so as to stop persecution and harassment operations against them.

But when we make an objective inquiry into the phenomenon of extremist terrorist organizations becoming active and taking upon themselves the responsibility of attacking unarmed Palestinian citizens, we realize that there are no extremist Israeli organizations. Instead there is "official terrorism" planned by the government's political and military agencies.

If we wanted to find out the truth about this terrorism, which is conducted by the people, or official terrorism, and if we wanted to find out the significance of opposition to this terrorism by official authorities who put the terrorists on trial and issue court sentences against them, we have to consider this important question in a calm and knowledgeable manner that is based on incidents and facts. We can thus find out the truth about what is happening, what the enemy is doing, and what our people in our occupied land are being subjected to.

The trials that were held in Israeli courts revealed two facts.

First, members of the terrorist organization are affiliated with the Gush Emunim Movement. They subscribe to the notion that the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are part of Israel and that Arabs must be either expelled from this land or killed.

Second, members of these organizations admitted vaingloriously and boastfully that they were the ones who had made attempts on the lives of West Bank mayors. They also admitted that they had taken part in the assassination of PLO representatives like Wa'il Zu'aytar, Muhammad al-Hamshari, Basil Qabisi and Muhammad Abu Diyyah. All these Palestinians were engaged in diplomatic activity, but they were easy targets for assassination.

We know that the Israeli government had always denied that it had anything to do with any of these terrorist activities, but it never hesitated to suggest every time a Palestinian was murdered that Arab organizations which considered the victim its enemy had assassinated him.

How much credibility then ought to be given to Israeli allegations which one time accuse extremist Arab or Palestinian organizations of committing these deeds and other times accuse Zionist organizations of committing them? Israelis describe these organizations as extremist, and they go so far as to indict them for such acts and put them on trial.

If we were to go back to 1947, that day when Zionist organizations committed their most heinous crimes in Dayr Yasin, where children were killed and pregnant women disemboweled, we would find that all the Zionist organizations at that time had cleared themselves in front of public opinion which denounced the gruesome massacre. Zionist organizations tried to attach the blame for these massacres on imaginary organizations that did not exist.

But if we were to read the book, "The Revolution," which was written and published by Menahem Begin 10 years after the massacre, we would find out how much pride Menahem Begin expressed in that massacre. When the book was published Mr Begin was president of the Herut Party in Israel's Knesset. He gave himself credit as leader of the Irgun Gang for occupying the small Arab village and slaughtering its children and women. This was done to make Palestinians, who would be horrified by details of the gruesome massacre, immigrate from their cities and villages.

Ever since the Zionist movement made plans to rob the Palestinians of their homeland, it established several political, cultural, religious, charitable and military organizations. But besides all these organizations it established three terrorist organizations. They are:

1. A guerilla force in the Palmach Army;
2. An armed gang that was called the Stern Gang; and
3. A destructive suicide squad that was called Irgun.

All those who later ruled Israel, starting with Ben Gurion, Sharit, Golda Meir, Moshe Dayan, Begin, Shamir, Rabin and Perez, are members of these terrorist organizations that were founded to have every Arab killed.

Let us go back to the terrorists' trials that were held in Israeli courts. Let us ask about "the awakening of the Israeli conscience" which made Israel appear to Arab and world public opinion as though it did not condone the actions of extremist Jews and their attacks on unarmed Arab citizens.

We know that military censorship in Israel maintains a tight hold on all media agencies. No Israeli journalist can publish anything about military or sabotage cases without the approval of the military censor.

How did the Israeli military censor allow all Israeli media--the press, radio and television--to publicize what took place during the trials of Jewish terrorists? How did the military censor allow the media to publish details of their confessions to those crimes they had committed? These crimes included attempts to burn and blow up al-Aqsa Mosque, killing and assassinating Palestinians, attempts to blow up mayors' cars, attacking students of Hebron University, planting mines in Arab buses that were about to carry worshipers, and other acts of murder and terror.

Furthermore, Zionist media agencies published the provocative confessions of saboteurs who confessed to actions they had intended to carry out. For example, they admitted they had intended to place bombs in sports arenas during school celebrations or soccer games. They said they had intended to place bombs in civilians' cars or at entrances to mosques so they could blow up the mosques and civilians during the Friday noon prayer.

Is this in fact an "awakening of the Israeli conscience," or is it a continuation of the criminal plan that was begun by Menahem Begin in 1947 in Dayr Yasin when he wanted to strike fear and terror in the hearts of Arab citizens so they would leave their homeland and run for their lives before the terrorists' knives, which were always dripping blood, got to them?

The book, "The Little Drummer Girl," by John Le Carre was published recently. In that book the author talks about Canadian journalist George Yunas, who spent 2 years investigating the phenomenon of Israeli violence and terror. Yunas was able to obtain confirmed information from two Israeli agents who were members of the retaliatory team that has been involved since the early seventies in operations to kill Palestinians.

Based on the documents he had, that Canadian journalist affirmed that Golda Meir, the enemy's prime minister at the time, had personally authorized operations to assassinate the Palestinian leaders Zu'aytar, al-Hamshari, al-Qabisi and Abu Diyah. The Canadian journalist affirmed that it was the Israeli intelligence agency, Mosad, headed by Avnir's retaliatory Ttam that carried out the operation.

And here we must pause and ponder the sequence of terror and murder that Jewish extremists have been carrying out for tens of years.

In the trials that were held in Israeli courts--those in which detailed confessions were published by all newspapers and all Israeli media--the saboteurs alleged that they were members of Gush Emunim. They confessed that they had, among other things, killed Palestinian diplomats 10 years ago. Then the Canadian journalist presents the confessions of the killers who had assassinated the Palestinian diplomats. He affirms, first, that those killers were a team from Israel's intelligence agency, the Mosad, and then he affirms once again that they had carried out their crimes with the approval of Golda Meir who was then prime minister of Israel.

The answer to the question about the significance of the relationship between Moussade and Gush Emunim has become quite clear. Does the prime minister authorize Moussade operations which, according to the confessions of the defendants who are on trial in Israeli courts, are the same as those of Gush Emunim, that is, if terrorism is not in fact an officially adopted plan?

In view of this official relationship between official terrorism and "extremist" terrorism, as it is described these days by Israeli media agencies, the truth about "the awakening of the conscience" emerges. Naive people thought that this awakening was some kind of democracy or a new direction in Israel's policy. But the truth has emerged so that the world would realize that Israel today is that same entity whose roots were established in Dayr Yasin in 1947. The world ought to realize that the trials which are being held for the defendants are nothing but one of the new methods Israelis are using to give notice to the Arabs of Palestine of what lies ahead for them--planting mines in playgrounds, mosques, homes and everywhere--if they continue to insist on staying in their country. The Israelis are using this new method to tell Palestinian Arabs that they have to leave and run for their lives just as those Palestinians did who fled after the Dayr Yasin massacre.

But did the Dayr Yasin massacre actually terminate Palestinian presence and put an end to the Palestinian Resistance on Palestinian land?

Did the massacres at Sabra and Shatila actually terminate Palestinian presence and put an end to the Palestinian Resistance against aggressors on Lebanese territory and everywhere?

There is no doubt that our people are no longer taken in by the terrorist methods of the Zionist aggressors. They will not break down; they will not give in; and they will not flee. In fact, the more artful Israeli government gangs become in committing new crimes, the stronger the will of our people becomes to stay close to their country and to sacrifice for every inch of its land.

The Kahana Stage Will Be One of Bloodshed

The authorities in Israel, however, are trying to disavow "the image" projected by terrorist Rabbi Meir Kahane who won in Israel's recent Knesset elections. Israeli authorities are trying to disavow that image because it reflects a true impression of the next Israeli stage which can only be described as a stage that will be marked by bloodshed: terrorism will be its slogan and bloodshed and destruction its method.

So that the world would not assume a cautious posture toward Israel, Chaim Herzog, the president of the so-called Israeli state, quickly announced that he would not see Rabbi Kahane in the course of his deliberations for forming the government. Teddy Kollek, the mayor of occupied Jerusalem also announced that Kahane's victory was a mark of shame on Israel's democracy.

One must wonder why these people were disavowing Kahane. Does he actually represent something other than what is their the goal, tendency or true nature?

The terrorist rabbi has a well-known criminal record all over the world. He is

the one who has been calling for al-Aqsa Mosque to be razed and for Arabs to be slaughtered and expelled. He is the one who wrote a book 2 years ago entitled, "Expel them or Kill Them." Of course the "Them" in the title refers to the Arabs. He was arrested more than once in New York for being involved in terrorist activities. In fact, his criminal record makes him a fugitive, and he is being sought by Interpol. Even the British government did not allow him to enter British territory 2 years ago.

And in spite of all that Kahane has become a member of the Knesset. But if we want to be precise, we will have to concede that it is because of all that that Kahane became a member of the Knesset.

The Israeli Knesset is not an ordinary parliament. Not anyone who wishes to serve in the Knesset or who has popular support can get a seat in it. The Knesset is a monopolistic institution that is open only to those who carry a Zionist passport affirming that the bearer can achieve the objectives of the Zionist movement and implement its crimes against the Arab people and the Palestinian homeland.

It is no coincidence that Knesset members are members of the military who in the past fought more than one war against the Arabs.

It is not a matter of commitment that all parties and extremist religious organizations get together in different blocs in the Knesset. They do that so they can continue to foster feelings of religious hatred toward Muslims.

It is also no accident that all the leaders of terrorist gangs, which played a role in terrorizing Palestinians and expelling them from their country, meet under the dome of the Knesset.

The Knesset is not a political gathering, as is the case with most parliaments in the world. It differs from parliamentary organizations in that it is a center for military men who have certificates to prove that they have the ability to kill people. The Israeli Knesset is a center for religious fanatics who have a long history of issuing legal opinions that allow criminals to shed the blood of innocent people.

Dayan's Experience with the Knesset

We may recall Moshe Dayan's story. Dayan broke off with Mapam after serving in Golda Meir's cabinet, and he tried to form a party so he could serve in the Knesset. But despite Dayan's career in crime and terrorism, he was the only one in his party who was able to win a seat in the Knesset. The members of his new party lost the elections, and none of them was fortunate enough to win a seat.

If both Dayan and Ezer Weizman--Dayan in the past and Weizman in the recent elections--failed to get any of their allies elected, how was Meir Kahane able to achieve such success?

Both Moshe Dayan and Ezer Weizman have served in the military and have been involved in terrorism since before 1948. They fought in all the wars that were experienced in the area. Nevertheless, they were unable to get any of their

supporters elected. When Kahane manages to achieve what those "giants" failed to achieve, that means that Kahane is not ranked below Dayan and Weizman as far as killing and terrorism are concerned.

Who Is Meir Kahane?

Let us pause briefly to reveal facts in Kahane's record that are still unknown. It was only a short time ago that the world began hearing Kahane's name and finding out about his views and his practices.

I heard Meir Kahane's name for the first time 1 week after the West Bank was occupied in 1967 when the terrorist Rabbi Moshe Levinger headed a group of Jewish families who went to reside in the Everlasting River Hotel in Hebron. They declared that the city belonged to their forefathers and ancestors and they said they were going to occupy it and expel the Arabs from it.

Kahane was living in New York when he read in newspapers Moshe Levinger's statement announcing that Hebron was a Jewish city and that he would turn the holy mosque of Abraham to a temple he called the Makhpela Temple.

The first thing Rabbi Kahane did was send two telegrams to Rabbi Moshe Levinger. The first telegram contained blunt statements that defined what the objectives of the Zionist movement have been from the very beginning. The telegram stated, "By entering Hebron, the city of our forefathers, you have achieved more glory than that achieved by the Israeli army in all its wars."

The other telegram stated, "We have sent you a sum of money donated by American Jews to be used for settling the city of Hebron. Please inquire at the Le'umi Bank to receive the first installment."

After these two telegrams were sent, Meir Kahane held several meetings in New York which culminated early in 1968 with an announcement that the Jewish Defense League was founded. The league raised funds and sent them to Moshe Levinger who then established the Hebron Settlement League. In time that league evolved into the Gush Emunim Community and other gangs that announced their objectives without any dissimulation. They declared that their objectives were to expel the Arabs and to seize every inch of Palestine.

If we were to go back to the inception of the Jewish Defense League and that of the Hebron Settlement League, we would find hundreds of statements made by Sharit, Golda Meir, Dayan, Eban, Alon and other officials denouncing attempts by "extremist gangs" to attack Arab citizens or seize their property. Time has revealed, however, that these people's statements were one thing and their meetings and communications another. The fact is they were scheming and planning all these aggressive and terrorist operations, and they were supporting them. Time has shown that the Gush Emunim Movement was attached to an army division from which it received funds and weapons.

When we consider the text of Meir Kahane's first telegram to Moshe Levinger, we will find out the truth about the principles and beliefs of the new Knesset member who considers "taking up residence at a hotel in Hebron" a greater achievement than all the achievements of the Israeli army during the wars of

1948, 1956 and the attacks they carried out on all Arab fronts between those dates.

There is no doubt that the words in the telegram clearly encouraged Jews to establish settlements, expel the Arabs and settle in their homeland without being bound by international conventions. Jews were encouraged to ignore the national rights of the Palestinian people who were now in the grip of occupation.

Those who followed "the drama" of several Jewish families taking up residence in the Everlasting River Hotel in Hebron early in the occupation know that these families then moved to the headquarters of the general commander of the occupation army, located on a hill overlooking Hebron. These families moved there after being subjected to Palestinian Resistance operations. Then the Israeli army confiscated land on (Namra) Hill and surrounding land bordering the holy mosque of Abraham. Residents of that land were expelled by force, and construction on the first Zionist settlement on the West Bank was begun. That settlement is Qiryat Arba', and it was then turned over to Rabbi Levinger and his aides. Those who have been watching this drama understand quite well that Levinger is not a conquering hero who occupied the ancient Arab city, and they also realize that Kahane is not a revolutionary fighter who provided backing and support to enable settlers to usurp the land of Palestine. Those who have been watching this drama realize that the two rabbis are nothing more than pawns in a chess game and that they are being used by the Zionist Movement which gave them their assigned roles of violence, terrorism and usurpation.

A False Democracy

Today, when we hear Chaim Herzog, Teddy Kollek or others making statements denouncing the fact that a symbol of aggression and terrorism won in the elections, we realize that such statements can be nothing more than an extension to "the drama" whose roles these people have mastered. These people want to appear to the world as though the Knesset were still a symbol of democracy and not a center for terrorism that publicly calls for the destruction of al-Aqsa Mosque, killing Palestinians and seizing every inch of their land.

Of course, presenting these facts will neither advance nor delay any of the things that are happening, as long as the Arabs still think that what is happening is merely a drama whose roles are being played on a stage and that their role in everything that is going on is that of spectators and onlookers.

The days will go by and Meir Kahane's voice in the Knesset will be heard. He will have backers and supporters. The cause of our people in the occupied land will enter into a difficult stage of bloody confrontations with the bloodthirsty rabbi who tried to go to Umm al-Fahm and other Arab villages to expel their Arab residents. The days will go by, as we continue to be spectators, declaring our disapproval and asking for the moral condemnation of such actions. And we will continue to state for the record that Israel is a non-humane society.

If the Arabs do not realize that the anticipated Kahane period is one that has been planned by the Zionist Movement, if they do not realize that it is their silence and their languor that has been encouraging the movement and turning it

into a legend, if the Arabs do not realize that and do not do something to forestall the bloody massacre before it takes place, we will live to see the day when Meir Kahane will become a hero of the Zionist invasion. He will find for himself a place of distinction beside Begin, Shamir and Dayan, those people who were turned into heroes by Arab impotence and silence, which also turned them from criminals into rulers.

The Resistance: Factions and Leaders

This review of numerous documents, positions and events is being presented to factions and leaders of the Palestinian Resistance. There is no doubt that these details, and perhaps even more than what we've presented here, is known to them. However, we are making this presentation today to tell them, "You must rise above your differences for the sake of the land. For the sake of our people you must strike down the plans that have been devised to drive wedges in your midst. Neither Zionism nor all the conspirators will be able to steal Palestine and liquidate its people unless they do so through your differences and your actions which continue to impede the fighting and the armed struggle."

Ehud Barak, chief of Israel's military intelligence agency said, as was mentioned early in this book, "If there has to be a liberation organization, then we want it to be fragmented and divided. We want it weakened and unable to convene its national council." When the chief of the enemy's intelligence agency makes such a statement, it is because he realizes that it is the disputes among factions of the Resistance that can help Israel achieve its objectives after all its military, terrorist and bloody methods failed to achieve them.

When the Resistance goes overboard in magnifying a dispute over one of its leaders and becomes divided because of a call to convene its highest authority, such action gives a clear indication of its credibility when it makes more important and more crucial decisions, such as the decision to rescue and liberate the people.

When the organization becomes incapable of protecting the independence of its national decisions and when its subordination to a country becomes public knowledge in the world, that provides evidence of how weak it has become. That weakness will hamper its ability to make crucial decisions, namely, those decisions which were its reason for being: decisions to protect Palestinian identity and save the land from occupiers.

But can the history of the Resistance Movement bring it to that end which is being sought for it today by those who have been planning to destroy and liquidate it? Ever since its birth early in 1956, the Resistance has been subjected to thousands of conspiracies that tried to liquidate or contain it or control its national decisions.

The PLO will not collapse. That fact was confirmed when Abu 'Ammar inaugurated factories for Palestinian weapons. It was confirmed when the camps among which Philip Habib wanted to scatter the fighters far away from Palestine were turned into camps for heroes. It was confirmed when we saw the air and sea formations of the Palestinian navy and the Palestinian air force. It was confirmed by that international demonstration of support for PLO leaders, and it is confirmed by

the backing the general commander of the forces of the Palestinian Revolution is getting from all the different Arab, Islamic, socialist and friendly countries. Although the PLO's course may be impeded for some time, its loyal members will not allow it to falter from now on. They will not subject the land to the danger of being seized, and they will not expose people to the imminent danger of extermination.

Rifle-bearing comrades in arms realize that the responsibility to liberate the usurped homeland will not be met unless all guns are pointed at the enemy. History will make very harsh judgments against those who kept those rifles from doing their part to rescue the country from the enemy's conspiracies. These conspiracies to break up the country, to alter its appearance and its landmarks and to extinguish its Arab character have grown worse. There are conspiracies to alter the Arab character of those people who remained steadfast, despite everything that happened, in the face of all kinds of mistreatment, injustice, terrorism and torture.

About this Book [Section appearing on the back cover]

The Palestinian departure from Beirut and the dissension within Fatah, which was followed by disputes between a number of factions in the Palestinian Resistance, have left a notion in the minds of many people that the PLO has been distracted from its fundamental question and that it will end up where the defeated or those who fight among themselves end up: as an organization that will be liquidated or terminated.

The author of this book had an opportunity to examine this organization carefully and to find out the facts about what is happening in it, quite apart from the disputes. He was the first one to declare the truth about the PLO's new reality.

He was the first man to walk into factories where Palestinian weapons are being manufactured, and we was the first one to see al-Sa'iqah troops, the air force, and the men of the navy. He lived with leaders and fighters so he could report the truth about an organization that has held on to its military option throughout its long struggle.

Books in Print by the Author

Resistance Books Series

1. "Al-Tawasu' al-Israili wa Harb al-Muwajahah al-'Arabiyyah" [Israeli Expansionism and the Arab War of Confrontation]
2. "Al-Mugawamah al-Falastiniyah wa Marahil Harb al-Tahrir al-Falastiniyah" [The Palestinian Resistance and Stages of the Palestine War of Liberation]
3. "Harb al-'Isabat al-Bulghariyah wa Harb al-Tahrir al-Falastiniyah" [Bulgarian Guerilla Warfare and the Palestine War of Liberation]

Palestinian Awareness Series

4. "Al-Suhayniyah: Nash'atuhah wa Qiyadatuhah wa Munazamatihah al-Sirriyah" [Zionism: its Birth, Leaders and Secret Organizations]
5. "Balfur: al-Mu'amarah al-Tarikhayah" [Balfour: the Historic Conspiracy]
6. "Al-Akhtabut: al-Intidab al-Britani" [The Octopus: the British Mandate]
7. "Al-Suhayniyah qabl al-'Udwan wa ba'duh" [Zionism before and after Aggression]
8. "15 Ayyar, 'Am al-Nakbah" [15 May: the Catastrophic Year]
9. "Ard al-Thawrat, Falastin" [Palestine: Land of Revolutions]
10. "Al-Fida'iyyat wa al-Fida'iyyun" [Male and Female Guerillas]
11. "Hazimah al-I'lam al-'Arabi wa Harb al-Tahrir al-Falastiniyah" [The Arab Media's Defeat and the Palestine War of Liberation]
12. "Madinah al-Khalil wa al-Suhayniyah" [Hebron and Zionism]
13. "Al-'Ubud ila al-Quds" [Passage to Jerusalem]
14. "Dayr Yasin: Juzur wa Ab'ad al-Jarimah fi al-Fikr al-Suhayni" [Dayr Yasin: Origins and Implications of the Crime in Zionist Thought]
15. "Al-Khiyar al-'Askari ba'd al-Khuruj al-Falastini min Bayrut" [The Military Option after the Palestinian Departure from Beirut]

Other Books

16. "Suriya al-Kubra" [The Great Syria] 1950
17. "Dawlah al-Zulm" [The Unjust State] 1951
18. "Fi Jawf al-Sahara'" [In the Depths of the Desert] 1954

19. "La'ub raghm Anfaha" [Flirtatious in Spite of Herself] 1955
20. "Al-Mar'ah wa al-Intikhabat" [Women and Elections] 1956
21. "Sawt Falastin" [The Voice of Palestine] 1960
22. "Al-'Arab wa Ghazw al-Fada'" [Arabs and the Conquest of Space] 1969



Abu 'Ammar examining the first R.P.G. guns produced in Palestinian factories.



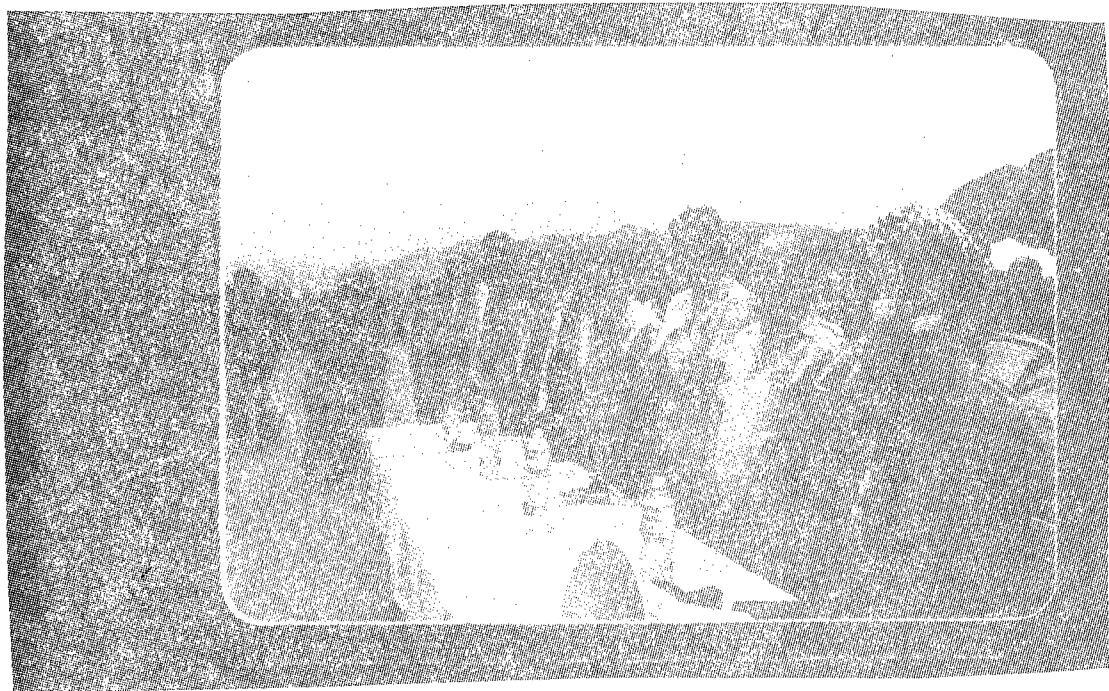
A Palestinian air force helicopter during a military exercise.



The command and observation center in a Palestinian navy ship.



New camps are turning out new fighters after the departure from Beirut.



Abu 'Ammar's meetings in camps for Palestinian troops are endless; there is always talk about the military option.



Training for children and young boys is reinstated to make them ready for the long battle.



Abu 'Ammar surveying a Palestinian weapons factory that was built after the departure from Beirut.



A weapons factory built by Palestinian scientists.



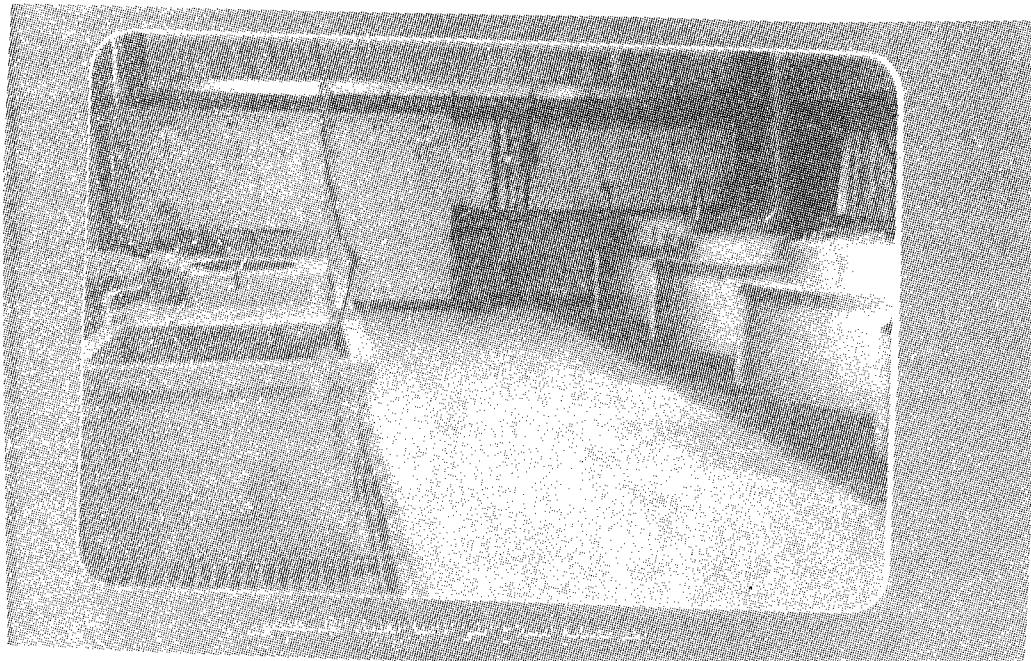
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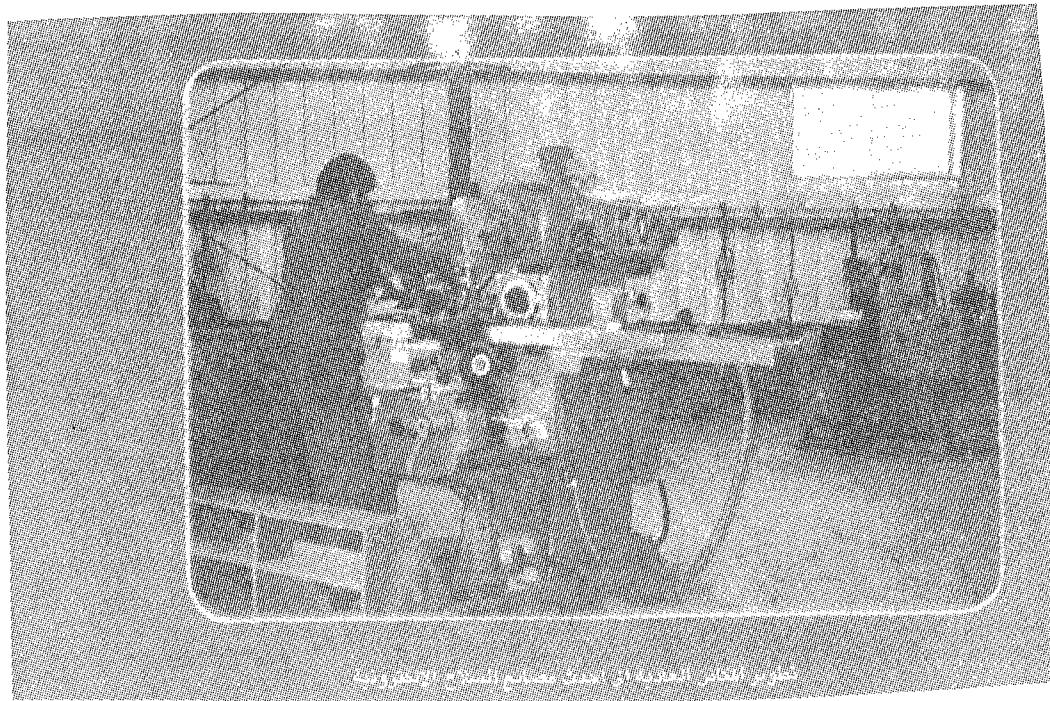
Training for children and young boys is reinstated to make them ready for the long battle.



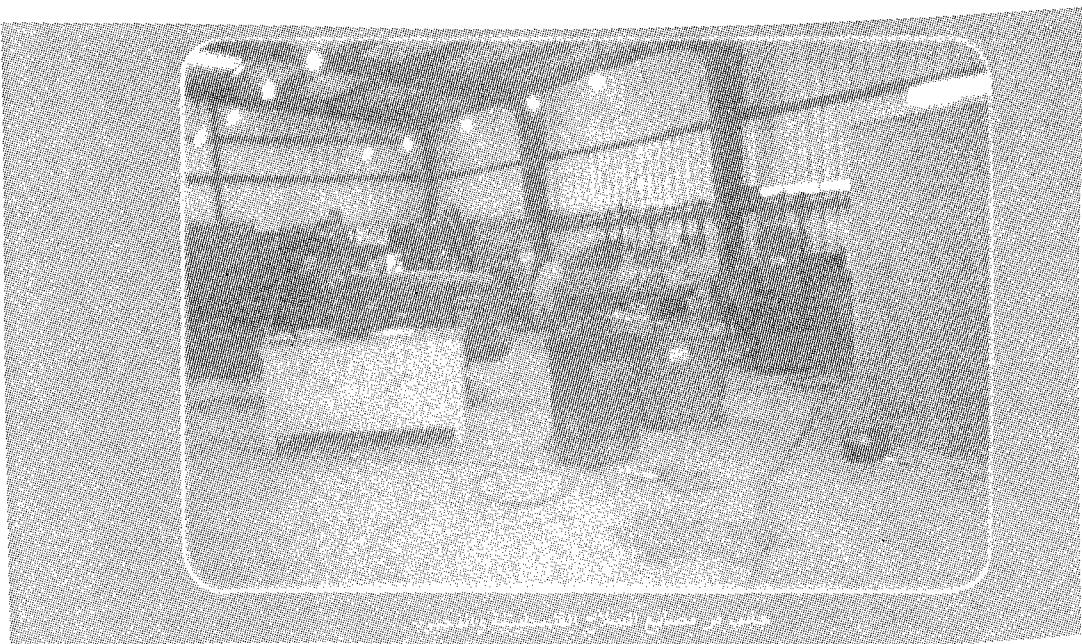
Abu 'Ammar surveying a Palestinian weapons factory that was built after the departure from Beirut.



A weapons factory built by Palestinian scientists.



Turning ordinary machinery into the most modern factories for electronic weapons.



A section of a Palestinian weapons factory and ammunition.



Abu 'Ammar with Palestinian pilots in the cockpit.



An exercise for Palestinian air force helicopters.

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